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CROSSREF

THE TERRITORIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EUROPEAN UNION SUBSIDIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT USED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE ÉSZAK-ALFÖLD (NORTH GREAT PLAINS) REGION OF HUNGARY BETWEEN 2014 AND 2020

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Abstract: In the EU budgetary period 2014-2020 the Hungarian Government devoted significant attention to economic development and its plan was to use 60% of EU regional policy subsidy for this purpose. In the light of this fact, the main aim of our publication is examine the spatial characteristics of the EU economic development aid awarded to local authorities situated in North Great Plain Region (Hajdú-Bihar county, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county), and to point out the differences between the individual areas and settlements. As a result of our research it can be concluded that firstly the smallest settlements were in an unfavourable position (fewer subsidy applications and smaller subsidy amounts), while in case of larger settlements, the examination does not show clear results. Secondly, if we look at administrative functions of settlements, the favourable position of district seats can be observed, which is particularly true in case of the development of industrial parks and industrial areas subsidy topic, Thirdly, examining the socio-economic conditions of settlements, the more unfavourable position of less developed settlements can be observed (lower success rate of subsidy applications), and this was also true for all topics of subsidies.

Key words: European Union, cohesion policy, North Great Plains – Hungary, economic development

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INTRODUCTION

After the accession of Central European countries to the European Union, one of the most important objectives was to facilitate the convergence of the region in terms of economic development, in which an important role was intended to be given to funds arriving in the framework of regional policy. The weight of the amounts concerned is well reflected by the fact that a very large proportion of investments in Hungary recently were implemented with the help of EU funding.

At the same time, in the period between 2014 and 2020, a major change occurred in the use of the approximately \in 22 billion of EU funds awarded to Hungary in comparison with the previous programming period: the Hungarian government has devoted very significant attention to economic development, and has declared its intention to use 60% of the given amount for this purpose. In the light of the above, in my opinion, it is a very important task to examine the general and territorial characteristics of the use of such funding as linked to local authorities in the specific region in Hungary, namely in the Észak-Alföld (North Great Plains) region, which is one of the least developed regions of the European Union.

The present paper consists of four larger units. After theoretical review the second unit presents the position of Hungary in the regional policy of the European Union between 2014 and 2020, while the third one deals with the situation of the region concerned and with the economic development concepts formulated in the counties constituting the region. What can be considered as the most important part of this paper is the fourth unit, which explores the spatial characteristics of the economic development aid received, pointing out the differences between the individual areas and settlements.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The territorial analyses related to the European Union can be fundamentally divided into two groups. On the one hand, such studies examined the characteristics in the territorial distribution of subsidies, and in the course of this, they pointed out, among other things, the contradictions between the Cohesion Policy and national regional policies (Novosak et al., 2015), as well as the role of subsidies in the renewal of cities (Monyók and Kozma, 2017). Analyses on the Czech Republic (e.g. Smékalova, 2018) explored settlement hierarchy playing a stronger role than socio-economic development, while Polish research projects (Kisiala et al., 2017) have concluded that there is a balance between the even and the concentrated distribution of subsidies, with a slow shift towards the latter.

On the other hand, the researchers also examined the effect of the subsidies awarded on the given area. In the course of this they (e.g. Dall'Erba – Le Gallo, 2007; Di Cataldo, 2017) showed, among other things, that the subsidies contributed to the economic growth of the less developed areas (at the same time, this effect was the strongest in the suburban areas near the cities - Gagliardi and Percoco, 2017), to the reduction of regional disparities (but this effect revers above some level of transfer intensity – Kyriacou and Roca-Salagés, 2012), to the improvement of accessibility (although in certain cases, this could only be observed in international terms - Rosik et al., 2015), and also increased the R&D performance of the given area (Ferrara et al., 2017). At the same time, the researchers have also pointed out that care must be exercised in the

awarding of the European Union subsidies, and that certain problems may also arise. Medeiros (2014), for example, called attention to the fact that the lack of territorial planning and strategic vision deteriorates the efficient use of the funds; Becker et al., (2012) concluded that in 36% of the receiving regions the amount of the subsidies exceeded the amount that could be used efficiently, while Percoco (2017) warned about the importance of the economic structure of the given area (cohesion policy could exercise the biggest impact in regions having a weak service sector).

DATA AND METHODS

In the course of the preparation of the paper, we fundamentally used two types of methods. On the one hand, we analysed the development documents prepared in the given period for Hungary and the counties concerned, and relying on these documents, we strove to determine what the most important efforts were. On the other hand, using the results of the applications for EU funding from the palyazat.gov.hu portal, we examined the application activity of the local authorities in the counties concerned as well as their success rates, and comparing these results against the socio-economic data of the given region, attempted to draw conclusions.

HUNGARY IN THE REGIONAL POLICY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION BETWEEN 2014 AND 2020

In the period between 2014 and 2020, calculated at the actual prices, Hungary receives European Structural and Investment Funds (European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund, Cohesion Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund) in the amount of \pounds 21.9 billion. Pursuant to the Partnership Agreement concluded between the European Union and Hungary, the overall national development objective of the 2014-2020 programming period is economic growth based on sustainable production with high added value and increasing the employment rate. There are five priorities linked to the above national development objective, which cover the entirety of development policy:

1. Improving the competitiveness and global performance of the business sector 2. Promoting employment through economic development, employment, education and social inclusion policies, taking account territorial disparities

3. Enhancing energy and resource efficiency

4. Tackling social inclusion and demographic challenges

5. Implementation of local and territorial development aimed at promoting economic growth

The objective and the priorities are achieved via 9 operational programmes (OP-s), in the framework of which different amounts are available (table 1). The Hungarian government intends to use approximately 60% of the available funding for direct economic development, in the light of which it is not surprising that the largest share of the funding will be available to applicants by way of the Economic Development and Innovation Operational Programme. The shares of five operational programmes are very similar, while the role of the other three can be regarded as minimal.

(Data Source: Hungarian Government, 2014a)					
Operational Programmes	the proportion of the amount available in the framework of the given operational programme from the total funding for Hungary (%)				
Human Resources Development OP	10.4				
Economic Development and Innovation OP	30.9				
Integrated Transport OP	13.3				
Environmental and Energy Efficiency OP	12.8				
Public Administration and Civil Service OP	3.2				
OP Fisheries	0.2				
Territorial and settlement development OP	13.5				
Competitive Central Hungary OP	1.9				
Rural Development Programme	13.8				

 Table 1. The operational programmes drawn up by Hungary for the period between 2014 and 2020, and the related financial resources (%)

 (Data source: Hungarian Government, 2014a)

From the point of view of local authorities, the Territorial and and settlement development Operational Programme (TOP) has outstanding significance, the primary aim of which is to support investments arising on the local (primarily settlement) level, considered as important by the local authorities and implemented by them. Within the operational programme, 7 priority axes have been identified (table 2), most of which received funding from both the European Regional Development Fund and from the European Social Fund.

Table 2. The priority axes identified within the Territorial and settlement development

 Operational Programme

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Priority axes	Share of priority axes (%)
1. Developing a regional economic environment to	24.2
promote employment	
2. Business-friendly, population-retaining	12.0
settlement development	
3. Transition to a low-carbon economy, particularly	16.3
for urban areas	
4. Development of local community services and	5.0
strengthen social cooperation	
5. County and local level human resource	7.3
development, social co-operation and employment	
incentives	
6. Sustainable urban development in county-level	31.4
cities	
7. Community-led local development	3.7

Within the operational programme, a special situation was occupied by the "Sustainable urban development in county-level cities," behind the separate treatment of which we can find the objective that the given settlement (county seats and other towns and cities with populations of over 50,000 people) and other settlements should not compete with each other for the development funds

(in the spirit of the above, the current analysis did not cover the three county seats in the region, and we also subtracted the population of the county seats from the population of the counties when calculating the relative values). In a separate decree, the government determined the amounts of development sources that would be available for the counties and cities of county rank [Government Decision no. 1702/2014. (XII. 3.)], and the leaders of the individual territorial units (county and municipal assemblies) decided how much they would allocate to each of the priority axes.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE REGION EXAMINED

Észak-Alföld, which is the region constituting the subject of our analysis, is located in the north-eastern part of Hungary, and it consists of three counties (Hajdú-Bihar county, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county – figure 1). It is among the least developed regions of the European Union based on several criteria. On the one hand, the per capita GDP in the region was only 43% of the EU's average in 2017, which put it ahead of only seven NUTS 2 level regions in the EU. On the other hand, according to the EU's European Regional Competitiveness Index, it occupied the 233rd position out of 268 regions, while on the basis of the European Regional Innovation Scoreboard, it was the 210th out of 238 regions. In the light of the above, it is hardly surprising that the counties constituting the region had very high hopes in connection with the regional policy funds available in the 2014-2020 EU programming period, and trusted that with the help of these they would be able to reduce their disadvantages in development.



Figure 1. Location of three counties making up North Great Plains Region (Source: own work)

Under the abovementioned Government decision no. 1702/2014. (XII. 3.), in the framework of the Territorial and settlement development Operational Program (TOP), together with national co-financing, Hajdú-Bihar county received HUF 49.62 billion, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county HUF 53.78 billion, while Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county HUF 89.28 billion in subsidies. In the interest of using these funds, also taking into consideration the requirements of the European Union, all three counties have prepared their own regional development concepts, regional development programmes, as well as the integrated territorial programmes including the distribution of the available resources. The set of objectives defined in the documents concerned devotes particular attention to local economic development: from among the comprehensive objectives formulated in the three counties, one in each county was directly, while the others were indirectly linked to the improvement of economic conditions (table 3).

Table 3.	The general objectives	formulated in	the territorial	development	concepts of the
		three counties	s examined		
	(Data source: Reg	gional developme	ent concepts of t	hree counties)	

	1 st General objective	2 nd general objective	3 rd general objective
Hajdú-	Economic	The strengthening of	Effective water and
Bihar	development based on	service, public health	energy management
county	the natural features,	and administrative	and the establishment
	traditions and	functions necessary	and development of
	research potential of	for reducing poverty	the conditions for
	Hajdú-Bihar county,	and social exclusion	sustainable
	which increases	and increasing the	environmental
	employment and	marketable skills of	management in order
	strengthens the	the working-age	to reduce the negative
	function of the county	population	effects of climate
	as the innovation		change in the Trans-
	centre of Eastern		Tisza region
	Hungary		
Jász-	A strong link with the	Dynamic balance of	Healthy, well-
Nagykun-	development axes of	diverse cultural	educated population,
Szolnok	the macroeconomy	landscapes	cooperative society
county			
Szabolcs-	The active county:	The county showing	The attractive county:
Szatmár-	value-creating	solidarity: Ending	Creating an attractive
Bereg	employment and	extreme poverty and	natural, social,
county	increased activity	supporting	cultural, and
		underdeveloped areas	economic
			environment

	Data source:	Regional	development	concepts of	f three co	ounties)
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RESULTS

Local authorities were best able to support the realization of the economic development concepts in the framework of the 1st priority axe of the Territorial and settlement sevelopment Operational Programme, "Developing a regional economic environment to promote employment," in which four measures, and within the first one, three sub-measures have been defined (later on, these constituted the subsidy structures that were announced):

- TOP 1.1: Development of local economic infrastructure

- TOP 1.1.1: Development of industrial parks and industrial areas

- TOP 1.1.2: Development of incubator houses

- TOP 1.1.3: Development of local economy (e.g. the development of municipally owned markets, developments in the area of agricultural logistics, developments serving the purpose of public catering);

- TOP 1.2: Sustainable tourism development from a social and environmental point of view;

- TOP 1.3: Transportation development serving the promotion of economic development and the mobility of the labour force;

- TOP 1.4: The improvement of employment and life quality through the development of family-friendly institutions and public services helping employment.

We examined the first two of the above four measures because, on the one hand, the implementation of TOP 1.3 was the task of Magyar Közút Zrt. (Hungarian Public Road Ltd), the company responsible for the operation and maintenance of public roads in Hungary, and on the other hand, TOP 1.4 is related to the topic of economic development only tangentially.

In the framework of the abovementioned integrated territorial programmes, the individual counties determined what amounts they would devote to each of the objectives. On the level of the measures, the distribution of the financing was determined by provisions of law (this is what the identical proportions are due to); the decisions on the level of the sub-measures, however, could be made by the counties themselves (table 4). It can be determined from the figures that Hajdú-Bihar county mainly concentrated on the development of industrial parks and industrial areas (it is partly true for Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county as well), while Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county put local economic development in the focus.

 Table 4. The distribution of the available TOP funds according to (sub)measures in the three counties of North Great Plains region between 2014 and 2020 (Data source: palyazat.gov.hu)

		TOP 1.1.	TOP 1.1.1.	TOP 1.1.2.	TOP 1.1.3.	TOP 1.2
Hajdú-Bihar	А	7,105	6,181	213	711	4,432
county	В	14.3	12.5	0.4	1.4	8.9
Jász-Nagykun-	А	7,701	5,701	1,000	1,000	4,800
Szolnok	В	14.3	10.6	1.9	1.9	8.9
county						
Szabolcs-	А	12,782	5,113	1,278	6,391	7,974
Szatmár-						
Bereg county	В	14.3	5.7	1.4	7.2	8.9

A – absolute amount (million HUF), B – participation from the total TOP funds available to the county (%)

If we examine the level of activity in submitting subsidy applications (table 5), the most popular topics were tourism development and local economic development. The third place was occupied by the development of industrial parks and industrial areas, while in the development of business incubators the local authorities had a fairly low level of activity. A comparison of the three counties shows that the highest level of activity could be observed in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, which was particularly true in the case of the measure related to tourism. The second place belongs to Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county (which actually occupied the first place in case of the TOP 1.1 measure), while the lowest level could be observed in case of the tourism development measure it was ahead of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county).

Table 5. The number of applications submitted to TOP subsidies in the topic of economic development in the three counties of the Észak-Alföld region in the 2014-2020 programming period (number of applications; in brackets: the value of all subsidy applications per 100,000 population, calculated with the 1 January 2017 populations figures)

	TOP-	TOP-1.1.2.	TOP-1.1.3.	TOP-1.1.	TOP-1.2.1.	total
	1.1.1.					
Hajdú-Bihar	18	1	17	36	29	65
county	(5.4)	(0.3)	(5.2)	(10.9)	(8.8)	(19.7)
Jász-Nagykun-	25	2	18	45	39	84
Szolnok county	(8.3)	(0.7)	(5.9)	(14.9)	(12.9)	(27.8)
Szabolcs-	28	5	50	83	27	110
Szatmár-Bereg	(6.3)	(1.1)	(11.3)	(18.7)	(6.1)	(24.8)
county						
total	71	8	85	164	95	259
	(6.6)	(0.7)	(7.9)	(15.2)	(8.9)	(24.1)

(Data source: palyazat.gov.hu)

If we examine the success rates of the subsidy applications (table 6), we can find similar values (around 70%) in case of the development of industrial parks and industrial areas and local economic development, while the lowest figures (partly due to the higher level of activity in submitting applications for subsidies) were found in connection with tourism development.

Table 6. The success rate of applications submitted for TOP subsidies in the topic of economic development in the three counties of the Észak-Alföld region in the 2014-2020 programming period (successful applications/submitted applications) (Data source: palvazat.gov.hu)

	TOP-1.1.1.	TOP-1.1.2.	TOP-1.1.3.	TOP-1.2.1.	otal
Hajdú-Bihar county	83.3	100.0	58.8	44.8	60.0
Jász-Nagykun-	72.0	100.0	66.7	71.8	71.4
Szolnok county					
Szabolcs-Szatmár-	57.1	40.0	74.0	44.4	60.9
Bereg county					
total	69.0	62.5	69.4	55.8	64.1

Table 7. The distribution of winning applications for TOP subsidies in the topic ofeconomic development as a subject of settlement size (calculated with the 1 January 2017population's figures)

(Data source: palyazat.gov.hu, National Territorial Development and Spatial Planning Information System)

	less than	2,000-	5,000-	more than 10,000
	2,000	5,000	10,000	inhabitants
	inhabitants	inhabitants	inhabitants	
share in the	22.5	25.6	21.4	30.5
population of the				
three counties (%)				
share in the winning	20.2	32.5	22.1	25.8
subsidy applications				
(%)				
share in the funds	13.6	27.6	26.0	32.8
secured (%)				

When analysing the territorial characteristics of the applications (table 7), we placed the main emphasis on the settlements, in the framework of which the first criterion of examination was the size of the settlements. On the basis of the

findings, first of all, the unfavourable position of settlements with a population below 2,000 persons can be observed: their share in both the winning applications and in the amount of the funds secured is lower than their share in the population of the region. In case of the next two population categories, the opposite is true (their share in the population is lower than the other two indicators), while in case of larger settlements, a transitory situation can be observed. The low share of settlements in the number of subsidy applications can be primarily attributed to the fact that the locally available capabilities (e.g. potential subsidy application opportunities, suitable management skills) allowed them to elaborate subsidy applications only to a limited extent.

With respect to the individual topics of the subsidies, however, very significant differences could be observed (table 8). In case of the development of industrial parks and industrial areas, the special position of larger settlements (more than 5,000 inhabitants) is quite clear; what is behind this fact is the preference of companies requiring such investments for larger settlements for a variety of reasons (e.g. the availability of suitable source of labour). By contrast, settlements with smaller populations played a much more important role in local economic development: the proportion of the two smallest categories was almost 1/3 also in terms of the amounts of the subsidies awarded. This can be explained by the fact that in the framework of such subsidies the support for such investments was in the focus (e.g. the development of local markets) that also played an important role in the lives of smaller settlements.

In terms of the development of tourism, the special position of settlements with a population between 2,000 and 5,000, as well as the largest settlements could be observed. The success of such subsidy applications depends primarily on the individual characteristics of the given settlements, which are of course, on the one hand, richer than the larger settlements; on the other hand, however, the situation is not so clear in case of settlements with populations below 10,000 people.

		less than	2,000-	5,000-	more than
		2,000	5,000	10,000	10,000
		inhabitants	inhabitants	inhabitants	inhabitants
share in the	TOP-1.1.1	6.1	26.5	36.7	30.6
winning subsidy	TOP-1.1.3	33.9	40.7	6.8	18.6
applications (%)	TOP-1.2.1	19.6	29.4	23.5	27.5
share in the	TOP-1.1.1	3.6	25.6	36.6	34.2
funds secured	TOP-1.1.3	32.5	32.6	10.8	24.1
(%)	TOP-1.2.1	16.8	27.9	20.4	34.8

Table 8. The distribution of winning applications for TOP subsidies in the topic of economic development as a function of settlement size and the subsidy topics (Data source: palyazat.gov.hu, National Territorial Development and Spatial Planning Information System)

Several important conclusions can be drawn with respect to the average size of the projects realized (table 9). On the one hand, the subsidies of the highest amounts were characteristics in the topics of the development of industrial parks and industrial areas and in tourism development, while in case of local economic development, the amounts were much smaller. What is primarily in the background of the above is that investments in the former two groups included many expensive elements (e.g., in case of TOP-1.1.1, the construction of lineal infrastructure, while in case of TOP-1.2.1, the purchasing of the tourism-related visual elements), which increased the size of the investments. By contrast, in case of local economic development, it was fundamentally the upgrading of the existing elements (e.g. local market) that took place, which meant a lower level of cost demands.

On the other hand, taking all economic development subsidy applications into consideration, with the increase of the population, the size of the subsidy applications also generally increased; however, there were differences in terms of the various topics. The fact mentioned in the previous sentence is true for the development of industrial parks and industrial areas, which is primarily due to the larger settlements being in the focus of interests for more companies, which necessitates the formation of industrial properties of larger sizes. In case of the other two subsidy topics, however, this pattern could not be observed, and this is particularly true for local economic development subsidies. In our opinion, this is attributable to the fact that in this case it is decisively the local characteristics that determined the size of the developments concerned, and the role of the settlement size can be regarded as minimal.

Table 9. The average project size of winning applications for TOP subsidies in the topic of economic development as a function of settlement population size and the subsidy topics (million Ft)

 (Data source: palyazat.gov.hu, National Territorial Development and Spatial Planning Information System)

	less than	2,000-5,000	5,000-	more than	total
	2,000	inhabitants	10,000	10,000	
	inhabitants		inhabitants	inhabitants	
TOP-1.1.1	235.8	383.6	396.3	444.5	397.8
TOP-1.1.3	128.2	107.1	212.2	172.9	133.6
TOP-1.2.1	312.1	345.0	315.3	460.8	363.4
all of the topics	193.7	245.7	340.5	368.8	289.3

As regards the settlements, the next aspect examined was legal status, and in this respect, we analysed the potential preference toward district seats (table 10).

Table 10. The proportion of subsidy applications from district seats in proportion to all successful TOP subsidy applications in the topic of economic development in the three counties of the North Great Plains Region

(Data source: palyazat.gov.hu, National Territorial Development and Spatial Planning Information System)

	Hajdú-Bihar	Jász-Nagykun-	Szabolcs-	North Great
	county	Szolnok county	Szatmár-Bereg	Plains
			county	Region
share in the	44.4	39.0	23.4	34.2
number of				
inhabitants (%)				
share in the	40.5	36.7	26.9	33.5
winning subsidy				
applications (%)				
share in the funds	59.2	46.5	47.7	49.8
secured (%)				

If we examine the region as a unit as opposed to county by county, we can immediately determine the significant share of the district seats from the subsidies secured (with indicators much higher than the other two), which refers to projects of larger scale on these settlements. Among the three counties, the biggest difference was found in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county, which is primarily due to its characteristic settlement structure: on the one hand, the proportion of district seats among settlements is the lowest here (approximately 5%, as opposed to around 10% in the other two counties), which causes a low share of the settlements concerned in the population. On the other hand, the settlements outside of the district seats have very low population levels (their average number of inhabitants is 1,576 inhabitants/settlement in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county, 2,516 inhabitants/settlement in Hajdú-Bihar county and 2,668 inhabitants/settlement in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county), which causes also low levels of activity in subsidy applications.

The result of the analysis between the administrative legal status of the settlements and the topics of the subsidy applications is fundamentally in line with the facts established above (table 11). The outstanding role of district seats can be observed primarily in case of the development of industrial parks and industrial areas, as well as in local economic development as topics. Investments in the former category have a significant force of spatial organisation, and consequently it is not surprising that such investments are realized on settlement of higher importance from an administrative point of view. Projects in the latter category primarily satisfy local needs, and thus, settlements outside of the district seats could also have opportunities.

		district seats	other settlements
share in the number of inhabitants (%)		34.2	65.8
share in the winning	TOP-1.1.1	46.9	53.1
subsidy applications	TOP-1.1.3	16.9	83.1
(%)	TOP-1.2.1	37.7	62.3
share in the funds	TOP-1.1.1	60.3	39.7
secured (%)	TOP-1.1.3	25.0	75.0
	TOP-1.2.1	48.8	51.2

economic development as a function of administrative legal status of the settlements and the subsidy topics (Data source: palyazat.gov.hu, National Territorial Development and Spatial Planning Information System)

Table 11. The distribution of winning applications for TOP subsidies in the topic of

The last element of the examination of settlements was the analysis of the link between the socio-economic position and subsidy activities, in the course of which we used the beneficiary status calculated on the basis of several indicators and also recorded in a provision of law for the determination of the socio-economic position (105/2015. (IV. 23.) Government Regulation on the classification on beneficiary settlements). On the basis of the data it can be concluded (table 12) that decision-makers did not strive to improve the position of settlements having a weaker socio-economic standing by way of economic development subsidies: the share of such settlements relative to total population exceeds their share in the successful subsidy applications and in the total amount of subsidies awarded (especially this latter fact can be regarded as unfavourable).

The analysis of the individual subsidy topics (table 13), in almost all cases, reveals the unfavourable position of beneficiary settlements, with the proportion of successful subsidy applications in the TOP-1.1.3 topic being the

sole exception. In terms of the amounts of subsidies awarded, the smallest difference (i.e. shortfall) is found in case of subsidies for tourism development, which can be regarded as an advantageous characteristic from the point of view that these generate new jobs as well as a revenue for the local authority, which may help the given settlement in closing the gap (it is from this point of view that the significant underrepresentation of subsidies for the development of industrial parks and industrial areas, which also has a similar effect, is an unfavourable characteristics).

 Table 12. The proportion of subsidy applications from beneficiary settlements relative to all successful TOP subsidy applications in the topic of economic development in the three counties of the North Great Plains Region

	Unidú Dihor	Iáng Nogelaup	Szabalas	North Croat
	najuu-billai	Jasz-Nagykuli-	Szaboles-	North Great
	county	Szolnok county	Szatmár-Bereg	Plains
			county	Region
share in the	48.5	31.8	65.5	50.8
number of				
inhabitants (%)				
share in the	48.6	26.7	64.2	47.0
winning subsidy				
applications (%)				
share in the	37.6	17.8	57.6	41.3
funds secured				
(%)				

(Data source: palyazat.gov.hu, 105/2015. (IV. 23.) Government Regulation)

Table 13. The distribution of winning applications for TOP subsidies in the topic ofeconomic development as a function of the beneficiary status of the settlements and the
subsidy topic

			<u> </u>
		beneficiary	other settlements
		settlements	
share in the number o	of inhabitants (%)	50.8	49.2
share in the winning	TOP-1.1.1	44.9	55.1
subsidy applications	TOP-1.1.3	55.9	44.1
(%)	TOP-1.2.1	39.6	60.4
share in the funds	TOP-1.1.1	41.6	58.4
secured (%)	TOP-1.1.3	46.3	53.7
	TOP-1.2.1	48.0	52.0

(Data source: palyazat.gov.hu, 105/2015. (IV. 23.) Government Regulation)

CONCLUSION

The most important findings of the study could be summarised as follows Even though the statutory frameworks determined the amounts of the subsidies available for the different purposes, within these frameworks, Hajdú-Bihar county primarily concentrated on the development of industrial parks and industrial areas, while Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county put local economic development covering several areas into the foreground. Subsidies for tourism development were the most popular among the local authorities, and it is partly due to this popularity that the success rates were the lowest in case of this topic.

If we examine the influence that population size plays, we can find that the smallest settlements were in an unfavourable position (fewer subsidy applications and smaller subsidy amounts), while in case of larger settlements, the examination carried out from various points of view does not show clear results. In terms of the administrative position of settlements, the favourable position of district seats can be observed, which is particularly true in case of the development of industrial parks and industrial areas subsidy topic, which has a significant force of spatial organisation. In terms of the socio-economic conditions of settlements, the more unfavourable position of less developed settlements can be observed (lower success rate of subsidy applications), and this was also true for all topics of subsidies.

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PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN POLAND AND THE UNITED STATES AND DEMOCRACY

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Abstract: The aim of the study is to show the weaknesses of the democratic system on the example of the presidential elections in the United States and Poland. The electoral system (US) and direct elections (Poland) were put together. The research used an analysis of the literature on the subject and simulated the results of the elections for the president of Poland, in accordance with the election system for the president of the United States. The simulation with the use of the electoral college showed that the real results in some presidential elections do not depend on the voters' decisions, but on the adopted electoral system only. The rules for electing the president in Poland meet the conditions of democratic elections to a greater extent than in the United States.

Key words: democracy, election, president, Poland, United States

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INTRODUCTION

Democracy – November 11, 1947, in a speech in the House of Lords, Winston Churchill stated that "democracy is the worst form of government, apart from all the other forms that have been tried from time to time". He also claimed that "Politics is not a game. It is an earnest business". The democratic system that prevails in many countries today is more of a power exercised and controlled by politicians than of conscious voters. It is politicians who set the rules under which citizens can make election decisions. And given the level of civil society in many countries, it is not surprising that Aristotle, as early as the 4th century BC, placed democracy with tyranny and oligarchy among three degenerated political systems, in opposition to politics, monarchy and aristocracy.

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The democratic system can be defined in different ways. However, choices are always its sine qua non feature. Democratic elections in which the electorate shows its preferences. It seems simple and obvious, and it is. However, in a democratic system in which the majority of voters win, from the moment their number exceeds the gathering possible, in the symbolic amphitheater carved on the Pnyx hill, a group of citizens, we begin to have problems with counting. And the well-known saying of Joseph Stalin: "It does not matter who votes, it is important who counts", confirms in us our belief that authoritarian power over citizens while maintaining the appearance of democratic procedures. However, it is not only important who counts the votes, but also according to what system they are counted.

The systems of dividing parliamentary seats according to the D'Hondt or Sainte-Laguë methods, known and used in many democratic countries, lead to the allocation of a party to parliamentary elections, with the same support, a different number of seats (Chmaj and Skrzydło, 2015). Hence, there is more and more discussion about new electoral models (Flis and Michalak 2017; Skomski et al., 2017). Similarly, the introduction of the electoral threshold eliminates from the distribution of seats the parties that did not exceed it, awarding other parties sometimes in a much more than representative dimension. An example from the parliamentary elections in Poland in 2015. The winning party won 37.58% of the vote with a turnout of 50.92%, but absens carens. However, thanks to the division of seats using the D'Hondt method, in force in accordance with the electoral law, and several election committees that did not exceed the election threshold (5% for election committees and 8% for the coalition of election committees), she obtained 235 seats in the Polish parliament out of 460, i.e. 51, 09%. Simple calculations show that in this case, with half of those eligible to vote in the elections, the distribution of seats according to the D'Hondt method and the operation of the election threshold, a party with real support of approx. 18.8% of the total electorate wins over half of the seats in parliament. . Similar problems concern elections to local self-governments (Kulas and Wendt, 2018), to the parliament (Markowski, 2016; Sieklucki, 2018) or to the European Parliament. In each of these cases, we are dealing with a large number of possible mandates. The democratic system functions quite differently in the case of the election of the president of the country (Brzezińska et al., 2016; Robak and Wojtasik, 2016) or, for example, the president of the city (Wendt, 1998a; Przybylska et al., 2016).

THEORETHICAL REVIEW BASED ON UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Compared to the parliamentary elections, the logic of direct presidential elections is much simpler (Blais et al., 1997). In the second round, in the event that the first did not bring any of the candidates a victory with a result exceeding 50%, two candidates are met. And voting is an election in a single-member constituency, in which the result is difficult to question. However, this simple system managed to be complicated, as shown by examples this time from the United States (Belenky, 2016; Coleman et al., 2000; Maisel and Brewer, 2011) and the election of the president of this country in 2000 and 2016, but a similar situation occurred also in 1824, 1876 and in 1888. It is possible thanks to the two-tier electoral system of presidential elections in force in the US.

The constitutional state body of the United States Electoral College elects the country's president and vice-president every four years (Peirce and Longley, 1981; Mann, 2001; Vinadia, 2016). From 1964 the number of electors equals the number of cogres members and representatives of the District of Columbia (DC). There are 435 congressmen in the House of Representatives; there are also 100 senates and 3 DC representatives. Each US state has two senates, and the number of representatives depends on the population size, the most populous state - California, in this situation has 55 electoral votes (3 electors). And the smallest states in terms of population, Alaska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Delaware, Montana, Vermont, and Wyoming each have 3 electoral votes (3 electors). Although the District of Columbia has no representation in congress, it elects 3 electors, which is as many as it could if it were a state. Thus, the Electoral College counts 538 votes, and for the presidential election, 50% plus one vote should be won. In 48 of the 50 states of the United States, voting votes for electors are based on a winner's wins all electors' votes in the state. If the electoral list of a party in one of these 48 states receives more than 50% of the votes, all electoral votes from that state are awarded to that party's candidate (Hall, 2016). The exceptions are the votes in the states of Nebraska (5 electors) and Maine (4 electors). In these two states, the winner gets two votes corresponding to the number of senators, and the rest are awarded in proportion to the voting results for the electoral lists. If, in each state, a different list of electors issued by the parties supporting the two most important candidates wins, the "senatorial" votes "cancel out", as each candidate would get two votes. Thus, the influence of the different system in these two states does not matter much in relation to the total number of votes, since only 5 electoral votes out of 538 are left to an unequal split.

In 2000 George W. Bush won the election with 48.35% (5 045 6002) of the vote and 271 electors, his rival Al Gore won 48.87% (50 999 897) of the vote and 266 electors. Similarly, in 2016. Donald Trump won 46.09% (62 984 825) votes and as many as 304 electors, and Hillary Clinton was supported by 48.18% (65 853 516) voters, but only 227 electors. Donald Trump became president despite gaining almost 2.9 million less than Hillary Clinton (Duncan and Levett; 2016; Fowler et al., 2016; Sides et al., 2017). His victory was determined by the victory in three states of the so-called Rust Belt: Michigan (16 electors), Pennsylvania (20 electors) and Wisconsin (10 electors), in which he won 48 electoral seats (Stolicki, 2016; Stoetzer et al., 2019). His total score in these three states was higher than that of H. Clinton only by approx. 78 thousand votes, however, this slight difference in number of votes gave him all the electoral votes from those states and the seat of the president of the United States. This system arouses more and more discussions and calls for its modification (Wright and Wright, 2018; West, 2019; Wood and Weisberg, 2019).

AIM, DATA AND METHODS

Compared to the US elections, the presidential elections in Poland are direct elections. However, to show the weakness of the democratic system based on the simple will of voters, in opposition to the system dependent on politicians, which is the thesis of the analysis undertaken, a simple experiment was carried out. 2016 elections in the United States won by Donald Trump, who won about 2% of the votes less than Hillary Clinton, but received the majority of the electoral votes (304 to 227). In 2020. The presidential election in Poland was won

by the incumbent president, Andrzej Duda, also gaining 2% more votes than his opponent - Rafał Trzaskowski. Taking into account all the differences between the political system in the USA and in Poland, the following research question was posed: "What would be the result of the presidential election in Poland in 2020 if the votes were converted according to the system in force in the USA?" (Bałuka, 2020). That is, if instead of direct elections in Poland, elections with the participation of the Electoral College were held. In the text by M. Bałuka it was assumed that the number of deputies would be reduced to 295, which corresponds to an average of one deputy per 130 thousand residents. The number of senators was set at 32, two for each province, together there would be 327 electors. With these assumptions, the election would be won by Rafał Trzaskowski, who won ten provinces and would win 219 electors votes against Andrzej Duda's 108 electors.

However, the differences between the political system in the USA and Poland, the number of inhabitants, changes in administrative divisions (Wendt, 1998b), changes in the distribution of seats in the Polish parliament and changes in the boundaries of electoral districts to the senate, prompted the authors to adopt different assumptions. When answering the research question posed above, two variants were assumed. In the first one, the country was divided into 16 voivodships and the number of deputies was calculated accordingly. On the other hand, the number of senators was reduced to 32, two for each province. In the second variant, in order to better show the phenomenon of electoral preferences and the potential distribution of electoral votes, a division into 49 regions was adopted, in line with the boundaries of district election committees. In this case, due to the location of the seats of district election commissions in the former 49 voivodeship cities, the number of electors in each district corresponds to the number of deputies and senators in the former voivodships, according to their division from before the country's administrative reform, which entered into force in 1999. After calculating the number of electoral votes in each of the two variants, theoretical results of the presidential elections in Poland were obtained, if they were held in the system adopted for the presidential elections in the United States.

Data on the number of deputies and the results of elections by constituencies come from the official announcement of the National Electoral Commission stating the results of the election of the President of the Republic of Poland of 13.07.2020, in which Andrzej Duda was re-elected in a direct vote, winning 51.03% (10 440 646) votes, and his opponent Rafał Trzaskowski received 48.97% (10 018 263) votes. With a slight difference in votes, the official results were released with a one-day delay, because in Poland, unlike, for example, Estonia and Slovenia, the E-Governance level desired from the point of view of digital security was not achieved (Bógdał-Brzezińska, 2018; 2020).

ELECTIONS OF THE PRESIDENT OF POLAND BY THE COLLEGE OF ELECTORS – DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH RESULT

In the first of the analyzed variants of presidential elections in Poland, the following assumptions were adopted in accordance with the system of the Electoral College functioning in the United States. The territorial division of Poland into 16 voivodeships, each of which is represented in the potential Electoral College by votes of two senates. In fact, in Poland we have one hundred senators elected in single-member constituencies. The number of deputies in each voivodship plus two senators corresponds to the number of votes of electors from that voivodeship (table 1). In total, we have 460 deputies and 32 senators, which together give 492 votes of electors. The winner of the elections at the voivodeship level wins all the votes of the electors from that voivodeship. If the American system was adopted in Poland, 246 electoral votes + 1 would have to be won to win the presidential election.

	Result of elections (%)		Number of electors' votes =		
Voivodeship				Deputies + Senators	
	Duda	Trzaskowski	Duda	Trzaskowski	
	Andrzej	Rafał	Andrzej	Rafał	
Dolnośląskie	44,61	55,39	0	36	
Kujawsko-pomorskie	46,77	53,23	0	27	
Łódzkie	54,46	45,54	33	0	
Lubelskie	66,31	33,69	29	0	
Lubuskie	40,20	59,80	0	14	
Małopolskie	59,65	40,35	43	0	
Mazowieckie	47,74	52,26	0	65	
Opolskie	47,36	52,64	0	14	
Podkarpackie	70,92	29,08	28	0	
Podlaskie	60,14	39,86	16	0	
Pomorskie	40,16	59,84	0	28	
Śląskie	48,99	51,01	0	57	
Świętokrzyskie	64,41	35,59	18	0	
Warmińsko-mazurskie	46,84	53,16	0	20	
Wielkopolskie	45,07	54,93	0	42	
Zachodniopomorskie	41,24	58,76	0	22	
Together	x	х	167	325	

 Table 1. Number of potential electors and the result of the election of the President of Poland 2020 – division of the country into 16 voivodeships)

 (Data source: own study based on official results by voivodeships)

As it results from the presented data (table 1), with the adopted election assumptions, Rafał Trzaskowski would be the winner of the presidential election, gaining 325 electoral votes, while Andrzej Duda would receive 167 electoral votes. In fact, Andrzej Duda won in direct voting with an advantage of about 422 thousand votes over the opponent.

The differences in the results of direct and electoral voting are a simple result of Andrzej Duda's high victory in the provinces where he won the majority of votes. In four voivodships it obtained over 60%, in Małopolskie 59.65% and only in Łódzkie 54.46%. Rafał Trzaskowski won in ten voivodeships, but he did not exceed the 60% threshold in any of them and in six of the voivodeships he won, he won with a vote difference of less than 10%.

Of course, one can also adopt other assumptions for simulating the election results in the system with an electoral college. However, taking into account the 100 seats of senators, as it is in reality, the final result will still reward Rafał Trzaskowski. In the case of 100 senators, we receive a total of 560 electoral votes. As Andrzej Duda won in the provinces of Małopolska (8 senatorial seats), Łódzkie (7), Lubelskie (6), Podkarpackie (5), Podlaskie (3) and Świętokrzyskie (3), together he would receive 32 electoral votes instead of 12. However, with this assumption, the number of senators will increase even more,

Rafał Trzaskowski would win instead of 20 as much as 68 electoral votes. His advantage would increase from 325 to 373 electoral votes in relation to the votes of Andrzej Duda, who would receive 187 electoral votes instead of 167.

Methodologically correct for the adopted simulation is also the division of senatorial seats by 2019 constituencies. However, in this case, too, it would give Rafał Trzaskowski an advantage with five votes (248: 243). The results of the 2019 parliamentary elections in which the party supporting Andrzej Duda won 48 seats as electoral votes for each of the candidates can also be accepted, which, however, does not allow to directly conclude that the remaining 52 seats would fall for the opponent.

The following research assumptions were adopted in the second variant, which, due to the greater number of territorial units, better corresponds to the actual election results. Each of the 49 District Election Commissions (DEC) was assigned a number of deputies corresponding to the former voivodeships. However, in the election system to the Seym in Poland before 1999 Only 391 Members were directly elected. The remaining 69 seats were filled from the national list. Until 1993 they were divided in relation to the results of election committees according to the Sainte-Laguë method, and then D'Hondt. The national list of nisiono in the new 2001 election law. With this in mind, individual constituencies were assigned only 391 parliamentary seats and each of them two senatorial seats, except for the districts of Warsaw and Katowice, where 3 senatorial seats were granted, with a total of 100 senators, which corresponded to the reality of changing the electoral law and introducing in elections to the senate of single-member constituencies. After adding the adopted number of deputies and senators, we get 491 votes of electors. In order to win the presidential election, if it were held in the manner of the United States, it would require 246 electoral votes.

	R		Result of e	Result of elections		Number of electors'	
No.	District		(%)		votes = Deputies +		
	Election	Voivodship			Senators	Senators	
	Commissions		Duda	Trzas-	Duda	Trzas-	
			Andrzej	kowski	Andrzej	kowski	
				Rafał		Rafał	
1	Wrocław	Dolnośląskie	40,02	59,08	0	14	
2	Jelenia Góra	Dolnośląskie	45,32	54,68	0	7	
3	Legnica	Dolnośląskie	53,50	46,50	7	0	
4	Wałbrzych	Dolnośląskie	46,50	53,50	0	10	
5	Bydgoszcz	Kujawsko-pomorskie	44,44	55,56	0	13	
6	Toruń	Kujawsko-pomorskie	46,04	53,96	0	9	
7	Włocławek	Kujawsko-pomorskie	53,88	46,12	6	0	
8	Lublin	Lubelskie	64,47	35,53	12	0	
9	Biała Podlaska	Lubelskie	68,08	31,92	5	0	
10	Chełm	Lubelskie	64,76	35,24	5	0	
11	Zamość	Lubelskie	66,31	33,69	7	0	
12	Zielona Góra	Lubuskie	40,22	59,78	0	9	
13	Gorzów Wielk.	Lubuskie	40,20	59,80	0	7	
14	Łódź	Łódzkie	46,48	53,52	0	13	
15	Piotrków Tryb.	Łódzkie	64,72	35,28	9	0	

Table 2. Number of potential electors and the result of the election of the President of Poland 2020 – division of the country into 49 district election commissions) (Data source: own study based on official results by District Election Commissions)

16	Sieradz	Łódzkie	63,83	36,17	6	0
17	Skierniewice	Łódzkie	65,52	34,48	6	0
18	Kraków	Małopolskie	51,15	48,85	15	0
19	Nowy Sącz	Małopolskie	72,46	27,54	9	0
20	Tarnów	Małopolskie	70,00	30,00	9	0
21	Warszawa	Mazowieckie	35,79	64,21	0	28
22	Ciechanów	Mazowieckie	66,45	33,55	6	0
23	Ostrołęka	Mazowieckie	69,67	30,33	6	0
24	Płock	Mazowieckie	59,39	40,61	7	0
25	Radom	Mazowieckie	67,53	32,47	10	0
26	Siedlce	Mazowieckie	68,58	31,42	9	0
27	Opole	Opolskie	47,36	52,64	0	12
28	Rzeszów	Podkarpackie	70,54	29,46	10	0
29	Krosno	Podkarpackie	70,14	29,86	7	0
30	Przemyśl	Podkarpackie	72,86	27,14	6	0
31	Tarnobrzeg	Podkarpackie	70,84	29,16	8	0
32	Białystok	Podlaskie	53,95	46,05	9	0
33	Łomża	Podlaskie	73,25	26,75	6	0
34	Suwałki	Podlaskie	60,15	39,85	7	0
35	Gdańsk	Pomorskie	37,57	62,43	0	17
36	Słupsk	Pomorskie	42,33	57,67	0	6
37	Katowice	Śląskie	44,96	55,04	0	43
38	Bielsko-Biała	Śląskie	53,62	46,38	11	0
39	Częstochowa	Śląskie	52,67	47,33	10	0
40	Kielce	Świętokrzyskie	64,41	35,59	14	0
41	Olsztyn	Warmińsko-mazurskie	44,63	55,37	0	10
42	Elbląg	Warmińsko-mazurskie	49,88	50,12	0	7
43	Poznań	Wielkopolskie	33,74	66,26	0	16
44	Kalisz	Wielkopolskie	54,03	45,97	9	0
45	Konin	Wielkopolskie	56,77	43,23	7	0
46	Leszno	Wielkopolskie	48,38	51,62	0	6
47	Piła	Wielkopolskie	45,07	54,93	0	7
48	Szczecin	Zachodniopomorskie	40,65	59,35	0	12
49	Koszalin	Zachodniopomorskie	42,17	57,83	0	7
	Together	Poland	Х	Х	238	253

The division of votes of potential electors, with the division of the country into 49 regions corresponding to District Election Commissions, assuming that the winner in the district receives all the votes of electors, gives bonuses to Rafał Trzaskowski. With the research assumptions given, Rafał Trzaskowski gains 253 votes, and Andrzej Duda 238 votes. This result is also different from the real one, but definitely closer to the real voting results. electorate. Based on the data (Table 2), it can be concluded that Rafał Trzaskowski, who is running for the presidency, definitely wins in districts that can be described as dominated by large cities. Out of twenty constituencies, he received over 60% of the votes in the constituencies of Poznań, Warsaw and Gdańsk. Over 55% of votes in Wrocław, Gorzów Wlk., Zielona Góra, Szczecin, Koszalin, Słupsk, Bydgoszcz, Olsztyn and Katowice. In the remaining eight, in which he won, the difference to the president applying for re-election was below 10%, including in the Elblag district he had a minimal advantage, as he received 50.12%

Andrzej Duda, in turn, won in 29 districts. However, as many as in seven he won 70% or more of the votes. In another 13 constituencies, he received over

60% of the votes. Only in seven out of 29 districts his victory over his opponent was less than 10%. If the US system was adopted, Rafał Trzaskowski would be the winner of the elections, but in the Polish system with direct voting, Andrzej Duda wins.

It would be interesting to analyze the results of elections aggregated to the level of counties, in which Andrzej Duda definitely won, winning the majority of votes in 236 counties, including 20 town counties (municipial communes with the land county rights). Rafał Trzaskowski won in 144 counties, including 46 town counties. He also won the fight for the votes of Poles abroad, winning 73.61% of the votes, and among the crews of Polish ships with the result of 69.44%. In the case of analyzing the results of elections in communes, Andrzej Duda's victory is even more clear. The president, who was seeking re-election, won in 1872 communes, and his opponent won only in 601 communes. In some of the communes, the president received over 90% of the support (the communes of Godziszów, Chrzanów and Kulesze. The best results, over 70%, were achieved by Rafał Trzaskowski in the communes of Suchy Las, Dobra and Osielsko. However, the analysis of the differentiation of electoral results in the presidential elections in Poland goes far beyond the in this work, the aim of the research and deserves a separate, analytical study.

CONCLUSION

In recent years, researchers of political systems and international relations have noticed a deepening polarization of the processes of hierarchization of power as opposed to traditionally understood democracy. This is expressed in several tendencies: firstly, in the oligarchization of party elites in postcommunist countries, which coincides with the entry into political life of a new generation of 25-30 year-olds who do not know the reality of the communist regime and do not take into account the socio-political values of the older generations. Secondly, it is expressed in the popular belief that power is the highest value among broadly understood social expectations, which is easily combined with the concept of strong leadership, which allows for shortening the decision-making process and enclosing it with accessible populist arguments.

Results of the presidential elections in Poland in 2020 confirmed the relationship between the efforts of the right-wing groups to consolidate the system of power based on populism, the oligarchization of the party elite and their support from conservative voters (the overwhelming majority of the Catholic faith) living in the overwhelming majority of the southern and eastern parts of the country as well as rural areas and towns with a relatively small population. The conducted research shows that Andrzej Duda's election success, as a candidate supported by the above-mentioned part of the electorate, was achieved not only with a slight advantage, but also reflected the delusion of the doublecounting system typical of democracy. The comparison of the case of the American and the Polish electoral system made it possible to demonstrate the clerical bias accompanying the designation of electoral districts, as well as the discretionary nature of determining the rules and procedures for counting votes. Summing up, democracy perceived through the prism of the Polish and American presidential election systems seems to be an illusory camouflage of the interests of party and official elites.

What should be emphasized, however, is that, with all the similarities and differences in the presidential elections in Poland and in the US taken or not

taken into account - democratic elections are held in accordance with the adopted and generally recognized electoral law. Recognized, in the case of the US does not mean that it is not questioned. And the example of elections in Poland shown in opposition to the US clearly shows a more complete presentation of the actual election decisions of the electorate carried out in direct elections in relation to elections in which we have an Electoral College system. But as Winston Churchill said "You can always count on Americans to do the right thing – after they've tried everything else".

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REVIEW OF ELECTORAL SYSTEMS IN SELECTED COUNTRIES IN 2020

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Abstract: A large number of different electoral systems operate in the world in 2020. The main types of electoral systems are majoritarian, mixed and proportional, but the division is imperfect. In the group of countries using the FPTP system, a political scene with two parties is most often created, similar to the Alternative Vote. The situation is different in the STV, Mixed-Member Proportional and Parallel systems, where different party systems can arise. Pure multiparty is most often achieved in the List Proportional system. The comparison of the electoral systems proves that even within the same group, the party system can be significantly differentiated due to the essential details of electoral law, the population of the state, and even the degree of maturity of its democracy.

Key words: Electoral system, Party system, Electoral Law, Proportional Representation, 2-Round System, STV, Alternative Vote, Parallel System

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INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this article is to review and compare the electoral systems in selected countries of the world with recognized democracy in 2020 and to indicate the similarities and differences between them, as well as their impact on the party system. Over the years, electoral systems in many countries change and there is a need for continuous updating of information on this subject. Electoral law is changing, as is the situation of political parties in various countries of the world. The article attempts to indicate the strengths and weaknesses of various electoral systems, using empirical evidence from selected countries in which such systems operate. Due to the lively discussion in many countries (e.g. in Poland) on the need to change the electoral system, the knowledge about the existing solutions seems to be valuable.

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ELECTORAL SYSTEMS OF SELECTED COUNTRIES – REVIEW

The electoral system plays a fundamental role in any election. In many cases, it decides against the will of the majority of voters about the final result, which is particularly evident in the case of the US presidential election (Wendt and Bógdał-Brzezińska, 2020). Obviously, the election results are influenced by the attitudes and preferences of the electorate, voter turnout and the level of development of the civil society (Wendt, 2007). However, different electoral laws can significantly affect the final results with the same real voter support. Similar problems in local elections appears (Wendt, 1998; Przybylska et al., 2016; Kulas and Wendt, 2018). Also in parliamentary elections, depending on the adopted electoral law, the final results may sometimes bring quite different results (Skomski et al., 2017).

Among the main authors who are leading the issues of electoral and party systems, we should mention Nohlen (2004), who includes guidelines for party divisions into two-party, with dominant parties and multi-party system. A similar classification was adopted in this study. The author also proposes electoral division for proportional (Proportional Representation, Mixed-Member-Proportional), semi-proportional (Parallel system, STV, SNTV) and Majoritatian (FPTP, two-stage system, alternative, group). Basically, Polish authors agree with such proposals (eg Antoszewski, 2002; Goduń et al., 1999). Certain questions raised by the classification of the Mixed-Member-Proportional system, because in fact it is a propositional system, it should rather be treated in the empirical evidences of the present, as a mixed system (as its name).

Each of the electoral systems has its own advantages and disadvantages. Michalak (2004), argues that proportional systems give a fairer distribution of seats that allocates voters will better, majoritarian systems are in turn easier for the voter region, and offers a choice to select a candidate directly, who is strongly associated with his constituency. Nevertheless proportional systems often results in political fragmentation of parliament, and the majoritatians deform the voters will, depriving of representation some of them. An attempt to reconcile majoritarian and proportional systems are mixed systems, where either a special law mechanic is used to make majoritatian systems more proportional, or there are functioning two methods of selecting candidates.

FPTP (First Past The Post), which is the electoral system of a relative majority with one voting round in a single-member constituency, have been developed and function in the Anglo-Saxon area, in countries such as United Kingdom, USA and Canada. It is one of the oldest electoral system in the world, and also chosen by huge amount of countries all over the world. This system is assessed differently by researchers. Żarnowski (2012) positively rates the technical and political efficiency of the system, and at the same time describes it as "eminently two-party" (despite the actual presence of several small parties in Great Britain), almost without a coalition and thus giving freedom to the government. Meanwhile, Antoszewski and Herbut (2006) indicates that such a system leads to the phenomenon of "artificial majority" as a result of over representation, ie gaining the majority of seats despite not having an absolute majority of public support. The author describes such a system as discriminatory, with significant deformation of voters' will. Similar assessments appear in relation to the US system. A serious problem of the American system is the phenomenon of gerrymandering, what is creating constituencies that distort the actual will of voters to benefit selected candidate or party.

Party	2005	2010	2015	2017	2019
Conseravtive	32.3%	36.1%	36.9%	42.4%	43.6%
Party	(30.7%)	(47.1%)	(50.8%)	(48.8%)	(56.2%)
Labour Party	35.2%	29%	30.4%	40%	32.1%
	(55.2%)	(39.7%)	(35.7%)	(40.3%)	(31.1%)
Other	32.5%	34.9%	32.7%	17.6%	24.3%
	(14.1%)	(13.2%)	(13.5%)	(10.9%)	(12.7%)

 Table 1. Results of last fice elections in UK (percentage of seats won) (Data source: Own work with Internet data¹)

Recent House of Commons elections confirm that the FPTP system supports two-party features (table 1). In United Kingdom, it is true that smaller, often regional parties exists, but two main parties play a leading role in political life. A similar situation, with even stronger bipartisanity, can be seen in the elections to the US House of Deputies, where none of other parties appeared in parliaments since a very long time (table 2).

Table 2. Results of last fice elections in the USA (percentage of seats won) (Data source: Own work with Internet data²)

Party	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018
Republican	51.7%	47.6%	51.2%	49.1%	44.8%
Party	(55.6%)	(53.8%)	(56.8%)	(55.4%)	(46%)
Democratic	44.9%	48.8%	45.5%	48%	53.4%
Party	(44.4%)	(46.2%)	(43.2%)	(44.6%)	(54%)
Othor	3.4%	3.6%	3.3%	2.9%	1.8%
Other	(0%)	(0%)	(0%)	(0%)	(0%)

Only a slightly different situation can be observed in Canada (table 3), which of the three countries described, is the least populated.

Party	2006	2008	2011	2015	2019
Liberal Party	30.2%	29.2%	18.9%	39.5%	33.1%
	(33.4%)	(25%)	(11%)	(54.4%)	(46.4%)
Conservative	36.3%	37.7%	39.6%	31.9%	34.3%
Party	(40.3%)	(46.4%)	(54%)	(29.3%)	(35.8%)
New Democratic Party	17.5% (9.4%)	18.2% (12%)	30.6% (33%)	19.7% (13%)	16% (7.1%)
Quebec Bloc	10.5%	10%	6%	4.7%	7.6%
	(16.6%)	(14.9%)	(1.2%)	(3%)	(9.5%)
Other	5.5%	4.9%	4.9%	4.2%	16.6%
	(0.3%)	(1.7%)	(0.8%)	(0.3%)	(10.7%)

Table 3. Results of last five elections in Canada (percentage of seats won)

 (Data source: Own work with Internet data³)

Despite the electoral system supporting bipartisanity, we are in fact dealing with a 2 + 2 system - with two main and two side parties, but even substantial support does not give smaller parties too many seats in parliament. However, only twice in described time it appeared that one party get the absolute majority in the Canadian House of Commons. Thus, it can be noticed that the

¹ http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/

² https://history.house.gov/Institution/Election-Statistics/Election-Statistics/

³ https://www.elections.ca/

majoritarian system does not have to lead to pure two-partyism and it is also related to the size of the country.

The FPTP system has recently met with strong criticism in Englishlanguage literature, especially in Great Britain. Dunleavy and Margetts (2005) pay attention to the decreasing voter turnout and the decreasing degree of representation of selected social groups in comparison with proportional systems. The authors even suggest that there are many arguments in favor of the need to reform the UK electoral system. Klemperer (2019) speaks in a similar vein, indicating that the system has lost its previous advantages. In the British variant, it stopped supporting stable governments, strengthening the dysfunction of the system and deepening the differences between regions, and in the author's opinion it would be a good idea to switch to a mixed or two-round system. There are also similar voices regarding the FPTP system in the US. Engstrom (2004) proposes that proportionality should be increased, at least partially, by considering the STV system or the system of alternative or limited vote, indicating pure proportional system as "alien" to the USA.

A modification of the FPTP is the system with two voting rounds that operates almost only in France. The constituencies are also single-member, but an absolute majority is required to be elected in the first round, in the second round, all candidates with support above 12.5% of the vote will compete, and if less than two have achieved such a result - two candidates with the best will be promoted to it (with best results in the first round). In the second round, the candidate with the most votes wins (an absolute majority is no longer necessary). In practice, the French system leads to a similar structure of the political scene to the British system. However, a significant change is possible and it appeared in 2017, when the balance of power in the French National Assembly changed completely (table 4).

Party	2002	2007	2012	2017
Socialists	24.1%/35.26%	24.7%/42.3%	29.4%/40.9%	7.5%/5.7%
Party	(24.3%)	(32.2%)	(48.5%)	(5.2%)
Republican	33.3%/47.3%	39.5%/46.4%	27.1%/38%	15.8%/22.2%
Party	(61.9%)	(54.2%)	(33.6%)	(19.4%)
Republic En				28.2%/43.1%
Marche	-	-	-	(53.4%)
Other	42.6%/17.4%	35.8%/11.3%	43.5%/21.1%	48.5%/29%
	(13.8%)	(13.6%)	(17.9%)	(22%)

Table 4. Results of last four elections in France – 2 rounds (percentage of seats won) (Data source: Own work with Internet data⁴)

The second round of voting increases the chances of smaller parties. Blais and Loewen (2009) pointed out that the existence of a second round of voting allows voting in it (as part of a cross-party coalition) against a certain force that entered the second round, which is not experienced in pure FPTP systems. It also leads to the development of specific voting strategies for voters. In terms of the main mechanisms and their weaknesses, however, the system is generally similar to FPTP.

An interesting type of voting law are the so-called preferential systems, in which the voter creates a ranking of candidates on the list, and in subsequent rounds of counting the votes, the next lowest-listed candidates are eliminated.

⁴ http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/

Their votes are passed on to the remaining candidates until the candidate who obtains an absolute majority of support remains. In Australia, such a system is known as the Alternative Vote in single-member constituencies. According to Wincławska (2017), the purpose of introducing such an ordinance in Australia was to provide the winning candidate with real support from the majority of voters. However, in the author's opinion, this system favors the two main political parties in Australia and causes the casting of a large number of invalid votes. The author's words aare confirmed with empirical evidences (table 5). The Greens, despite the solid support of over 10% of voters, win less than 1% of seats. In this point, the Australian system, like the FPTP, favors stronger groups, giving them a significant over-representation

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Party	2006	2009	2013	2016	2019
Coalition of liberal and national parties	42.1% (43.3%)	43.3% (48%)	45.6% (60%)	42% (50.7%)	41.4% (51%)
Labour party	43.4%	38%	33.4%	34.7%	33.3%
	(55.3%)	(48%)	(36.7%)	(46%)	(45%)
The Greens	7.8%	11.8%	8.7%	10.2%	10.4%
	(0%)	(0.7%)	(0.7%)	(0.7%)	(0.7%)
Other	6.7%	6.9%	12.3%	13.1%	14.9%
	(1.4%)	(3.3%)	(2.6%)	(2.6%)	(3.3%)

Table 5. Results of last five elections in Australia (percentage of seats won) (Data source: Own work with Internet data⁵)

Another preferential system is Ireland's Single-Transferable Vote. As with the Alternative Vote, the candidates are ranked here, but unlike the Australian system, elections are held in multi-member constituencies - which makes it impossible for one power to dominate the constituency and makes the ordinance proportional.

Table 6. Results of last five elections in Australia (percentage of seats won) (Data source: Own work with Internet data⁶)

Partia	2002	2007	2011	2016	2020
D' D''	41.5%	41.6%	17.5%	24.3%	22.2%
Flanna Fall	(48.8%)	(46.6%)	(12%)	(27.8%)	(23.1%)
Sinn Fóin	6.5%	6.9%	9.9%	13.8%	24.5%
Sinn Fein	(3%)	(2.4%)	(8.4%)	(14.6%)	(23.1%)
Eine Oral	22.5%	27.3%	36.1%	25.5%	20.9%
Fille Gael	(18.7%)	(30.9%)	(45.8%)	(31%)	(21.9%)
Labour Portu	10.8%	10.1%	19.5%	6.6%	4.4%
Labour Party	(12.7%)	(12.1%)	(22.3%)	(4.4%)	(3.8%)
The Greens	3.8%	4.7%	1.8%	2.7%	7.1%
	(3.6%)	(3.6%)	(0%)	(1.3%)	(7.5%)
Other	14.9%	9.37%	15.2%	27.1%	20.9%
	(13.2%)	(4.4%)	(11.5%)	(20.9%)	(20.6%)

Seats in the Irish version of the STV system are allocated using the Droopa system in three, four and five-seat constituencies. The results of the elections in Ireland (table 6) show the real multi-party nature of the system. Leading parties have evolved, but their support has changed over the years. A

⁵ https://results.aec.gov.au/

⁶ http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/

large percentage of seats are won by non-mainstream parties representatives and independent candidates. To build a majority, coalitions are necessary typical of proportional democracy.

Mixed systems are another interesting variant of electoral law. They are divided into similar to proportional - Mixed-Member Proportional and Parallel. In the first group, we can distinguish Germany. The German voter casts 2 votes one for a candidate from a single-member constituency, the other - for a party list (the order of candidates on the list is determined by the party). District seats are allocated in accordance with the assumptions of the FPTP, while seats from party lists - by a method proportional to the result obtained from the "second vote" given by the voter. The distribution of seats is currently done using the Webster-Sainte-Laguë method. There is a 5% election threshold and a threshold of at least 3 mandates from single-member constituencies. An additional modification are "surplus seats", which are obtained by the party with better results in the single-member constituencies than in the general vote. This leads to an increase in the number of MPs in the Bundestag. The German system, unlike many other countries using single-member constituencies, ultimately leads to the creation of a multi-party system (table 7) with the domination of two major political blocs. It is worth to notice the number of seats is alocated almost perfectly in proportion to the election result obtained.

Party	2002	2005	2009	2013	2017
	38.5%	35.2%	33.8%	41.5%	32.9%
CDU/CSU	(41.1%)	(36.8%)	(38.4%)	(49.4%)	(34.7%)
CDD	38.5%	34.2%	23%	25.7%	20.5%
SPD	(41.6%)	(36.2%)	(23.5%)	(30.5%)	(21.6%)
FDP	7.4%	9.8%	14.6%	4.8%	10.7%
	(7.8%)	(9.9%)	(15%)	(0%)	(11.3%)
The Creene	8.6%	8.1%	10.7%	8.4%	8.9%
The Greens	(9.1%)	(8.3%)	(10.9%)	(10%	(9.4%)
The Left	4%	8.7%	11.9%	8.6%	9.2%
	(0.4%)	(8.8%)	(12.2%)	(10.2%)	(9.7%)
Other	20/	40/	60/	11%	17.8%
	3%	4%	0% (0)()	*AFD – 4.7%	*AFD – 12.6%
	(0%)	(0%)	(0%)	(0%)	*(13.3%)

Table 7. Results of last five elections in Germany (percentage of seats won) (Data source: Own work with Internet data⁷)

In the international literature, the German system is generally assessed well. Zittel (2017) speaks positively about the real and fair proportionality of the system, noting at the same time that it does not fragment the political scene. According to the author, this system performs well especially when compared to pure proportional systems.

The electoral system in New Zealand works similarly to the German system, which since 1993 has replaced the former FPTP. As in Germany, the voter has two votes - one of which he votes in a single-member constituency (the seat is allocated in accordance with the FPTP principle), the other - for a candidate from the national party list (candidates are listed alphabetically). Seats from national lists are allocated using the Sainte-Laguë method, but only to parties exceeding 5% of the vote. Alternatively, these parties may win as many seats as the single-member constituencies have won. Mandates in single-

⁷ http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/

member constituencies may also be won by non-party candidates. After subtracting from the total number of seats in parliament - the seats filled in this way - the seats are divided among the individual candidates in the constituencies. Seats are awarded to all winners in single-member constituencies - if this would result in an increase in the parliament's size - it is so. On the other hand, if the party obtained support higher than it won seats in single-member constituencies - the remaining seats are filled with candidates from the national list. The effects for the party system are almost identical to those in Germany (table 8), however, the number of supporting parties is generally limited to two, which may be due to the size of the country.

Party	2005	2008	2011	2014	2017
National Party	39.1%	44.4%	47.3%	47%	44.5%
National 1 arty	(39.7%)	(47.5%)	(48.8%)	(49.6%)	(46.7%)
Lobour Dorty	41.1%	34%	27.5%	25.1%	36.9%
Labour Party	(41.3%)	(35.2%)	(28.1%)	(26.4%)	(38.3%)
New Zealand	5.7%	4.1%	6.6%	8.7%	7.2%
First	(5.8%)	(0%)	(6.6%)	(9.1%)	(7.5%)
The Greens	5.3%	6.7%	11.1%	10.7%	6.3%
	(5%)	(7.4%)	(11.6%)	(11.6%)	(6.7%)
Other	8.8%	10.8%	7.5%	8.5%	5.1%
	(8.2%)	(9.9%)	(4.9%)	(3.3%)	(0.8%)

Table 8. Results of last five elections in New Zealand (percentage of seats won) (Data source: Own work with Internet data⁸)

 Table 9. Results of last two elections in Hungary (percentage of seats won) (Data source: Own work with Internet data⁹)

Party	2014	2018
Fidesz + KDNP	44.9%	49.3%
TIGE 52 · REIG	(66.8%)	(66.8%)
Socialist Dorty	25.6% - in coalition	11.9%
Socialist I ally	(19.1% - coalition)	(10.1%)
Jobbik	20.2%	19.1%
	(11.6%)	(13.1%)
Other	9.3%	19.7%
	(2.5%)	(10%)

Another form of the mixed system is in force in Hungary, where since 2011 we can talk about a pure mixed system, i.e. a parallel system (with a certain deviation from the norm). Following the reform of the electoral law, 106 MPs are elected in single-member constituencies in one voting round (FPTP), and the remaining 93 seats are divided into national committees using the D'Hondt method with a 5% electoral threshold (10% and 15% in the case of a two-party or multiparty coalition). The voter, like in Germany and New Zealand, casts two votes - one district and one for the national list. A nuance is the fact that the surplus of the election result of the candidate winning in a single-seat constituency (over the number of votes necessary to win) is transferred to the national list of the party proposing the candidate - and increases the result of this list. In theory, such a system should lead to the formation of two party blocs, but in fact, for many years in Hungary, we have basically had an almost one-party system with a strong dominance of Fidesz (regularly gaining almost

⁸ https://www.electionresults.govt.nz/

⁹ http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/

two-thirds of seats in the parliament) with a powerful fragmentation of the opposition part of the political scene (table 9).

The system also contributes to a overwhelming over-representation of the dominant party, an excellent example of which is the 2014 elections, where the second and third lists of candidates in total received more votes than Fidesz, and won less than half of the seats that Fidesz received. Kubas (2012, 2018) estimates that this was the purpose of the electoral system introduced in Hungary from the very beginning, which makes the system highly criticized.

The party system of Lithuania, which also uses the parallel voting system, is completely different (table 10). Out of 141 seats in the Lithuanian Seym, 71 are filled in single-member constituencies, but, similarly to France, with absolute majority rule, in two voting rounds (the two candidates with the highest number of votes go to the second, unless one has already obtained an absolute majority in the first round). The remaining 70 seats are filled from the national list of candidates, with a 5% election threshold (7% for a coalition). Contrary to the German system, the voter may himself name the names of 5 supported candidates or - as in Germany - vote for the list without specifying the names. Seats from the national list are filled with the Hare-Niemeyer method. As a result, the system is multi-party and highly fragmented. Jagusiak (2011) indicates that this is what proves political pluralism in Lithuania.

Party	2004	2008	2012	2016
Homeland Union	14.4%	19.7%	15.1%	22.6%
Homeland Onion	(17.7%)	(31.9%)	(23.4%)	(22%)
Union of Farmers	7.7%	3.7%	4.1%	22,5%
and Greens	(7.1%)	(2.1%)	(0.7%)	(38.3%)
Socialdemocratic	17.6% - koalicja	11.7%	18.4%	15%
Party	(22%)	(17.7%)	(27.7%)	(12.1%)
Liberal Mexamont		5.7%	10%	9.5%
Liberal Movement	-	(7.8%)	(7.1%)	(9.9%)
Labour Dorty	21.4%	9%	19.8%	4.9%
Labour Party	(27.7%)	(7.1%)	(20.6%)	(1.4%)
Other	38.9%	50.2%	32.6%	25.5%
Other	(25.5%)	(33.4%)	(20.5%)	(16.3%)

Table 10. Results of last four elections in Lithuania (percentage of seats won) (Data source: Own work with Internet data¹⁰)

The last examined group are proportional systems based on candidate lists, which are among the most commonly used in the world, alongside the FPTP system, especially in Europe, where they definitely dominate. Spain is one of the countries applying such electoral law. The Congress of Deputies consists of representatives elected by proportional representation using the D'Hondt method and a 3% electoral threshold on a district scale. The state is divided into 50 constituencies, each of which coincides with the borders of one province - at least 2 seats are filled in each constituency. 2 out of 350 seats are elected exceptionally in the FPTP system - this only applies to the exclaves of Ceuta and Melily (two single-member constituencies). Voting is made on the party list (in single-member constituencies - for a candidate). Despite the fact that the Spanish system has been really multi-party in recent years (table 11), due to the mechanisms adopted (D'Hondt method, small constituencies) in the past it

¹⁰ http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/

was a truly two-party system. According to Riera and Montero (2017), the Spanish electoral system has been under attack in recent years by both politicians from small parties, journalists and scientists. The most popular voices indicate the system's bias towards large parties and the need for more proportionate elections.

Party	2011	2015	2016	2019 (spring)	2019 (autumn)
PSOE	28.8%	22%	22.6%	28.7%	28%
	(31.4%)	(25.7%)	(24.3%)	(35.1%)	(34.3%)
People's Party	44.6%	28.7%	33%	16.7%	20.8%
	(53.1%)	(35.1%)	(39.1%)	(18.9%)	(25.4%)
Vox	-	0.2% (0%)	0.2% (0%)	10.3% (6.9%)	15.1% (14.9%)
Podemos (coalition)	-	20.7% (19.7%)	21.2% (20.3%)	14.3% (12%)	12.9% (10%)
Citizens - Civic	-	13.9%	13.1%	15.9%	6.8%
Party		(11.4%)	(9.1%)	(16.3%)	(2.9%)
Other	26.6%	14.5%	9.9%	14.1%	16.4%
	(15.5%)	(8.1%)	(7.2%)	(10.8%)	(12.5%)

Table 11. Results of last five elections in Spain (percentage of seats won) (Data source: Own work with Internet data¹¹)

The Dutch system is assessed much better. The Netherlands is divided into 20 electoral districts, but in the country most often one list of candidates is issued in all districts, which means that the distribution of seats is de facto nationwide (with voting for a specific candidate).

Party	2003	2006	2010	2012	2017
People's Party for Freedom and Democracy	17.9% (18.7%)	14.7% (14.7%)	20.5% (20.67%)	26.6% (27.3%)	21.3% (22%)
Labour Party	27.3% (28%)	21.2% (22%)	19.6% (20%	24.8% (25.3%)	5.7% (6%)
Freedom for Party	-	5.9% (6%)	15.4% (16%)	10.1% (10%)	13.1% (13.3%)
Christian	28.6%	26.5%	13.6%	8.5%	12.4%
Democratic Appeal	(29.3%)	(27.3%)	(14%)	(8.7%)	(12.7%)
Democrats 66	4.1% (4%)	2% (2%)	6.9% (6.67%)	8% (8%)	12.2% (12.7%)
Green Left	5.1% (5.3%)	4.6% (4.7%)	6.7% (6.67%)	2.3% (2.7%)	9.1% (9.3%)
Socialist Party	6.3% (6%)	16.6% (16.7%)	9.8% (10%)	9.7% (10%)	9.1% (9.3%)
Other	10.7% (8.7%)	8.5% (6.6%)	7.5% (6.3%)	10% (8%)	17.1% (14.7%)

Table 12. Results of last five elections in The Netherlands (percentage of seats won)(Data source: Own work with Internet data¹²)

The amount necessary for the distribution of seats is calculated in a manner similar to the Hagenbach-Bischoff method (with the division of votes exactly by the number of seats), then seats are allocated to parties in proportion to the number of times the amount is exceeded. Any remaining seats after such

- 11 http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/
- 12 http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/
a division are allocated using the D'Hondt method. The seat distribution system shows that the real election threshold is only 0.67%. As a result of such electoral law, in the Netherlands we can speak of a pure multiparty system (table 12). Kasprowicz and Zweiffel (2014), are calling the current (after 1994) period in the parliamentarism of the Netherlands a time of "extreme multi-party", indicating that in the years 1946-2012, 28 new political parties appeared, mainly episodic, there were also a lot of mergers and transformations.

Poland has been using the proportional system since the first fully free elections in 1991 (Wendt, 2001). After its multiple changes, seats are now awarded according to the D'Hondt method in 41 constituencies of various sizes. There is an election threshold of 5% for the party and 8% for the coalition. In recent years, the Polish electoral system has met with a huge wave of criticism in the public debate, because twice in a row (2015 and 2019) the winning party obtained clearly less than 50% of the votes and won over 50% of the seats, and especially smaller parties btained grossly fewer seats than they should as a result of their electoral support.

	-				
Party	2005	2007	2011	2015	2019
Low and Justica	26.99%	32.11%	29.89%	37.58%	43.59%
Law and Justice	(33.70%)	(36.09%)	(34.13%)	(51.09%)	(51.09%)
Circia Diatforma	24.14%	41.51%	39.18%	24.09%	27.40%
Civic Platform	(28.91%)	(45.43%)	(45%)	(30%)	(29.13%)
Democratic Left Alliance (and coalitions)	11.31% (11.96%)	13.15% (11.52%)	8.24% (5.87%)	7.55% (0%)	12.56% (10.65%)
Polish People's	6.96%	8.91%	8.36%	5.13%	8.55%
Party	(5.43%)	(6.74%)	(6.09%)	(3.48%)	(6.52%)
Other	30.6% (20%)	4.32% (0.22%)	14.33% (8.91%)	25.65% (15.43%)	7.9% (2.61%)

 Table 13. Results of last five elections in Poland (percentage of seats won)

 (Data source: Own work with Internet data¹³)

It is also indicated by the mathematical measures of disproportionality of elections. In 2015, the Gallagher Index was 15,79%, and the Loosemore-Hanby Index was 19,78%, and in both cases these were the highest results since 1993. Nevertheless, in its history, the Polish system has the typical features of a multiparty system, however, the electoral law favors the formation of two dominant blocks (table 13).

COMPARISON OF ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

When discussing individual electoral systems, one can notice numerous similarities and differences between them (table 14). Majoritarian systems of Great Britain, USA, Canada, but also the electoral system of Australia and partly New Zealand and Germany result in the formation of two-party or two-party systems supplemented by the presence of several minor, smaller parties. In turn, the systems of Ireland, Lithuania, Spain, the Netherlands and Poland generate multi-party systems. The Hungarian system is a special case, which should ultimately result in the emergence of a two-party system, but currently it favors the domination of only one party. An interesting phenomenon are such large differences within the same family of systems (eg USA - UK, Canada; Lithuania -

¹³ http://www.pkw.gov.pl/

Hungary; Germany - New Zealand; Australia - Ireland and in the group of countries using proportional systems). In fact, the appearance of the political scene depends not only on the electoral system (however it is strongly connected to the details of electoral law such as amount of seats in constituency, method choosed to alocate seats or thereshold), but also on other variables - first of all, the population of the state, but also on more complex components, such as the maturity of the democratic system.

Country	Population (2018/2019)	Number of deputies (lower House)	Avarege norm of representation	Electoral system	Party system
United Kingdom	67 530 000	650	104 000	EDTD	2+
USA	329 065 000 435		756 000	FFIF	2
Canada	37 411 000	338	111 000		2+2
France	65 130 000	577	113 000	2-Round Majoritarian System	2+
Australia	25 203 000	151	167 000	Alternative Vote	2
Ireland	4 882 000	160	30 500	Single- TransferableVote	M-P
Germany	83 517 000	709	118 000	Mixed-Member	2+M-P
New Zealand	4 783 000	120	40 000	Proportional	2+2
Hungary	9 685 000	199	49 000	Dorollol	1+
Lithuania	2 760 000	141	20 000	Falallel	M-P
Netherlands	17 097 000	150	114 000		
Spain	46 737 000	350	133 000	List Proportional	M-P
Poland	38 400 000	460	83 500		

 Table 14. Norm of representation, electoral system and party system of selected countries (Data source: Own work with Internet data¹⁴)

CONCLUSIONS

There are a number of different electoral systems in operation around the world, with the dominant role of the FPTP system and the proportional system based on candidate lists. Each of the electoral systems results in a different shaping of the political scene, also similar systems in different countries, due to their specificity, may generate different results. The basic criteria influencing the party system are therefore not only the general electoral system, but also its details, such as the size of constituencies, number of voting rounds, the election threshold or the adopted method of converting votes into seats, and even the method of voting by the voter. Important factors are also - the country's population and the maturity of its democracy.

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¹⁴ https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population/

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URBAN RESILIENCE DEFINITIONS AND LIMITS OF CONCEPTUAL INTERPRETATION

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Abstract: Urban resilience is the capacity of cities to confront any potential and actual challenges through anticipation, adaptation and recovery. There are many definitions of urban resilience, each focusing on a different aspect – government, administration, society, economy, capacity to withstand outside and/or inside threats, ability to grow and so on. When analyzed and taken as a whole, our view is that these theories create the image of the city as a living organism, made up of a number of elements that must work together in order to maintain it resilient to shocks and capable of absorbing shocks. The fundamental unit of this organism is the individual – and the individual's resilience gives the tone for the resilience of the whole. From this perspective, we can say that urban resilience works like an immune system – its role is mainly to prevent but, when needed, also to withstand actively against any threats and/or shocks.

Key words: resilio, economic shocks, political shocks, social shocks, durable development, climate changes, systemic characteristics of resilience, development of human communities

* * * * * *

INTRODUCTION

The capacity to withstand shocks – resilience – comes from the Latin word resilio, "to leap or spring back, to recoil, to rebound" (Muller, 2010, p. 1).

It means the ability to withstand – through anticipation, adaptation and recovery – any potential difficulties, crises, pressures, challenges, losses, abuses, failures, poverty, abandonment, personal or natural catastrophes, unfavourable stimuli etc. Psychology borrowed the term from the resistance of materials, which can be "folded and bent without breaking, only to come back to their initial shape" (Collin, 2002).

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METHODOLOGY

In order to better understand what resilience in general - and urban resilience in particular - means, let us first look at some of the most important types of shocks: economic and financial (recession, inflation, lack of resources, poverty etc.), political (dictatorship, war, terrorist threats etc.), ecological (natural catastrophes, epidemics, global warming, severe effects of pollution informational (informational attacks, media disinformation, etc.). manipulation), scientific (rapid change of technologies), criminal (mafia, corruption). Institutional resilience (economic, geopolitical) is the capacity of geopolitical and economic institutions to withstand shocks that threaten internal structures, driven by the power to react and communicate interpersonally that should be a feature of their members and of everyone responsible for their effective operation.

In psychology and in other social sciences, the term means the ability to go through disturbing, stressful and risky situations without being irreversibly affected by them. It is, therefore, the ability to react and respond to something that takes us out of a state of equilibrium and to recover by integrating that something in a superior balance. It has been said it has a compensatory, protective or adversative function. The term has been used with several meanings : "a good development in spite of social danger, retaining competences in spite of continuous stress and recovering after a trauma" (Werner, 1995, p. 81); "the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress-such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors. As much as resilience involves bouncing back from these difficult experiences, it can also involve profound personal growth" (American Psychological Association, 2012); "resistance relative to the psychosocial stress" (Rutter, 1999, p. 119); "refers to a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity; [...] exposure to significant threat or severe adversity; and the achievement of positive adaptation despite major assaults on the developmental process" (Luthar et al., 2000, p. 543).

However, it is not merely an individual capacity, but one to which many contextual factors contribute. A living organism might be the most suggestive example, since all its parts collaborate with the environment through constant changes, on different levels, in order to maintain its dynamic balance, in spite of factors that threaten its health. Let us use this analogy going forward.

Urban resilience is, therefore, the capacity of the city as an organismic demographical (overcrowding, to absorb shocks: depopulation), unit informational (cyber-attacks), media (fake news, panic attacks), financial (sudden variations of the financial market, financial blocks, payment defaults), industrial (pollution, risk of explosions), administrative (bureaucratization), economic (decrease in the standard of living, unemployment rate, lack of social protection, strikes), political (corruption, crises), communicational (improper infrastructure), juridical (inability to protect the citizens' rights and liberties, abuses), natural (earthquakes, floods), alimentary (selling of rotten or out of date food), criminal (terrorism, areas with a high risk of criminality), psychological (attacks by mentally disturbed persons), religious (dangerous religious sects), cultural and sportive (inability to sponsor or finance, subculture), educational (illiteracy), health (improper sanitation), energetic (power outages, gas outages), ecologic (pollution or buildings that suffocate the

green environment) etc. Lack of communication between structures of public administration and between these structures and the private environment is another aspect that weakens urban resilience.

Urban resilience has also been defined as:

- "the ability of persons, communities, institutions, businesses and systems inside a city to survive, adapt and grow, in spite of any chronic tensions and acute shocks they might experiment" (Silva, 2012, p. 3).

- "the process of urbanization and planning through healthy development practices, inclusive political processes, reducing the risk of disasters through the actions of the government, the citizens or any other parts involved" (Johnson and Blackburn, 2012, p. 11).

- "A resilient city is a sustainable network of physical systems and human communities" (Godschalk, 2003, p. 137).

- "Resilient cities reduce vulnerability to extreme environments and respond creatively to economic, social and environmental changes in order to increase long-term sustainability"¹.

- "A resilient city is characterized by its ability to resist or absorb the impact of a risk or danger through resistance and adaptation, which allow it to maintain certain functions and fundamental structures during a crisis and to recover after such an event" (Twigg, 2007 cited in Johnson and Blackburn, p. 6).

– "a city's ability to react to terror and crises without losing what makes it attractive, livable and interesting".²

- "what helps cities adapt and transform in the face of challenges in order to prepare for the expected and the unexpected".³

- "Traditionally, OECD tends to use resilience as meaning the capacity to withstand crises. We acknowledge that the systemic threats against modern societies are increasingly difficult to put into a model and are often too complex to be solved by using the traditional approaches to risk estimation that focus first on the rigidity of the system and its ability to absorb threats before the break. The new approach to resilience will focus on the system's ability to anticipate and absorb, to recover and adapt to a large spectrum of systemic threats" (Linkov et al., p.134).

- "A resilient city or a resilient society has a greater capacity to adapt and is capable of adapting to the changing environmental or contextual conditions and to quickly recover from the negative consequences. Resilience can therefore be understood as a comprehensive, holistic approach to the problem, with the purpose to maintain the general capacity of resisting, regenerating and developing of natural and social systems. Under the circumstances of the city's transformation, resilience is oriented towards the future and faces the challenge to recognize and anticipate the dynamics of development early on. This evolutionary model of adaptive cycles is based on two factors: on the one hand, the resources specific to the systems («the structural potential» for a change) and on the other the degree of connectivity («internal connectivity»), which is the degree of internal association of various elements in a system, which can, for example, be increased by creating networks in the social context" (Fekkak, 2016, p. 10-11).

³ www.100resilientcities.org

¹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnership/?p=1622

² https://www.transforming-cities.de/urbane-resilienz-schutz-des-oeffentlichen-raums/

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Prof. Ulf Hahne identifies four characteristics of resilience: robustness, response time, redundancy (reserves and resources), learning capacity (Prof. Dr. Ulf Hahne, Resilienz, Raum und Steuerung). We find that "planning a resilient city requires using dichotomic concepts: redundancy and efficiency, diversity and interdependence, stability and flexibility, autonomy and cohesion, control and unpredictability" (Ann-Kristin Winkens, Die Grenzen der Stadt – Urbane Resilienz).

An essential factor for improving resilience is the specific interconnectivity of living organisms. "Humboldt was a firm believer that the distinct disciplines were artificial divisions of knowledge and that the key to understanding nature was interconnectivity. He wrote in his journal: Everything is interconnected and interdependent" (Doherr, 2015, p. 47).

Furthermore, Humboldt observes, "the main impulse that guided me was the serious effort to understand the phenomena of physical objects in their general connection and to represent nature as a great totum moved and animated by internal forces" (Schrodt et al., 2019, p. 1636).

In the concept of urban resilience are mingled two factors: the force or the activity of the social organism and its passive resistance. According to Leibniz, "without a doubt, entelechia – that is, the force or the activity – is different from resistance or passivity in that the former can be seen as form and the latter as raw matter; however, they are not so different that they must be viewed as two different substances, but as parts of one unique substance, and the force that moves the raw matter is, in any case, not the force of the raw matter, but entelechia itself. (...) Should one leave out entelechia, one cannot find true unity" (Leibniz, 1872, p. 382-383).

Given that the increase in social contrasts leads to a decrease in resilience, we consider the difference between the medium wage and the minimum wage as a relevant indicator of economic resilience.

One other indicator of economic resilience, beyond the inflation rate and the unemployment rate, is the difference in numbers between the young population and the old population, with the decrease in birth rate being directly proportional to the decrease in resilience.

Resilience is improved through the social assistance of private firms, donors and volunteers, with the involvement of the state.

As is the case with a living organism, where when certain structures fail, others can take over their function, resilience is the urban, economic, social etc. organism's ability to take over as a whole the functions of certain structures affected by shocks. This can happen on the one hand through the spontaneous regulative dynamism of the local community and of the state, and on the other through a continuous effort of anticipating possible shocks by tempering their impact or even avoiding them altogether through searching and finding solutions in advance.

It is important for the institutions able to anticipate urban shocks to not be commanded by political or economic interests which can generate false predictions, in turn deepening the state of shock.

Religious thought can be a catalyst for the ability to resist when it becomes that point of support in transcendence which avoids panic and dramatically influences resilience. Furthermore, a religious thought that surpasses the logic of fighting and antagonism, of self-affirmation against alterity, and embraces o logic of communion with a cosmic extension by asserting the dignity of the iconic figure of man and creation helps improve resilience as a factor regulating the conflict that undermines social, economic, urban etc. "immunity".

An important element of resilience is the relationship between law and freedom, which must be moderated so that it stimulates and gives room for personal initiative that might generate order for the benefit of the community, but also limits and disarms the individual's destructive actions.

The work of the virtues that make the human consciousness transparent and open to the loving interplay with other consciousness is essential, because inter-subjectivity – that is, communication between consciousnesses – is the unquantifiable foundation of resilience, both in a passive and an active sense. The actuality and the implementation on a social level of this work of the virtues is difficult given the diversity of individual options, but a communication based on the logic of dialogue, integrating local specificities and diversities, is crucial. The rigidity or lack of flexibility found in planning and governing policies (in the case of dictatorships, for example) or in defense, adaptation and innovation systems is a major risk for the collapse of resilience.

Since any form of resilience is based on personal resilience, the education system, the professional and academic systems and the medical system are keyelements that stimulate resilience, through support and investments. Infrastructure, telecommunications, mass-media are also factors that increase inter-subjectivity and bring essential value to the field of resilience.

Last but not least, man's relationship with nature, his vital environment, is a key-element in the equation of resilience. Man's mindfulness towards the health and environmental balance of the planet is today more important than ever, as the effects of pollution and global warming accumulate and start irreversible phenomena on a global level.

CONCLUSION

Resilience is, in some sense, the equivalent of an immune system that helps the organism prevent potential external and internal attacks, diseases and shocks that – once the organism has been weakened – turn from potential threats to actual threats.

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WESTERNIZATION, ASIANIZATION AND AFRICANIZATION THE WORLD BETWEEN 1500 AND 2100

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Abstract: Until 1800, China and India were the dominant powers of the world, when they are overtaken by the powers of Western Europe, and after 1900 they will be overtaken by the USA, then by Russia and Japan. Now it is time for the Chinese continent to re-assert itself, and after 2050 India will have a similar path and after the end of the demographic explosion in Africa predicted towards the end of the 21st century, it will also become one of the world's rulers, thus proving that the West is only a tab in the history of the movement of wealth on Earth.

Key words: great powers, demographic explosion, domination, evolution, industrialization

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INTRODUCTION

The West's goal of maintaining world supremacy tends to be disrupted by two extreme factors, namely the industrialization and overpopulation of its former colonies and subjugated states. The small population of Africa, Latin America and Asia that was a supplier of cheap raw materials and importers of finished products with high commercial addition, now with the demographic explosion is forced to cultivate alone the agriculture necessary to feed the population and to process more and more from the raw material, while the western states are facing demographic decline, the aging of the working population and economic greening policies that lead to the closure of production centers, which are being transferred to the new industrial powers. The former states of the Third World need more and more raw materials giving up their export, and the countries that remain suppliers of these materials redirect their attention, from the West, to these new demographic powers.

The current trade picture shows a change that began slightly in the 1940s and accelerated after 1970, with a dizzying speed after 2010, in which the

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countries of the Asian continent from exporting raw materials become heavy consumers and continents and countries such as Africa, Russia, Australia and Latin America, from loyal customers in the US and Europe, are now exporting to Asia. The rapid development of Japan and South Korea, isolated, overpopulated states (340 inhabitants / km² and 510 inhabitants / km² respectively), in unfavorable climatic and geological conditions, are telling what can follow with similar states such as: Vietnam, Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Uganda or Egypt, and the current economic boom in China gives hope for economic success for countries such as India or Nigeria.

Looking at the population of the Western world, there will be a growing frustration in terms of the demographic dimension of the global planet (the West had 30% of the world's population in 1900, 17% in 2020 and only 13% forecast for 2100), access to the planet's resources increasingly hampered by the growing need of overpopulated states, in the little manufacturing industry that will be made will work millions of emigrants from the south and east with different religions and customs and who are satisfied with low wages and In lower labor standards, products for sale will be made in Asia or Africa, with more and more of the specifics of the civilization in which they were created and new industrial concentrations will pollute the planet, flooding with residues and newly green states that have just killed industry and increased fines and restrictions for their populations, all for environmental protection.



Figure 1. Heavyweights economic planetary between the years 1500 and 2100 Sources: processed after: Atlasul Geografic al Lumii, 2016; Vlad et al., 2010; Der Grosse Marco Polo Weltatlas, 1994

THE SUNRISE IN THE 21ST CENTURY COMES FROM ASIA

The continent is growing demographically and economically annually as much as the whole of spain

The Asian continent has experienced an accumulation of population that no longer allows it to be an exporter of raw materials, and now with the reduction of the population explosion begins to gallop industrialization based on

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a colossal able-bodied population, even importing raw materials from The West expanded, attracting: Russia, Australia, Latin American states and Africa in its sphere of influence (Gaceu, 2007; Mâşu, 2014; Pomeranz, 2009).

As shown in the table below, among the most populous, densely populated or representative European states, the density was 100 inhabitants / km² in 1900, while the population density in 9 Asian states was only 30 inhabitants / km² and only 12 inhabitants km² in Africa, which demonstrates why European countries were forced to develop intensive agriculture and industrialize, importing raw materials from low-density countries. By 2020, although the density in these European countries will increase to 170 inhabitants / km², in the Asian countries it will reach 300 inhabitants / km², which explains the extent of industrialization and the hunger for raw materials in this continent. But in their turn, the African states, which are growing from 12 to 150 inhabitants / km², are starting to raise the issue of industrialization, this process being for the time being only at the planning or dream stage. Until the years 2050 and 2100, the density will increase in the 9 European states with 10 places, reaching 180 inhabitants / km², which is quite a lot if we consider that Romania will decrease to less than 70 inhabitants / km² and Russia below 8 inhabitants km², but if we look at the 9 states in Asia, here it increases by a total of 180 inhabitants reaching in 2050 to 400 inhabitants /km² and 480 inhabitants /km² in 2100. In these conditions the European states can no longer maintain the title of importing states of raw materials and exporting goods to the Asian states that will become the top of production in a situation of forced and maximum need (from now on, India already has 460 inhabitants / km² and China 150 km² while the USA only 35 inhabitants /km²). Although Asia is the star of industrialization at the beginning of the 21st century, it seems that towards its end, African states are growing from just 12 inhabitants / km² as they were when they represented only a few European power colonies, to over 500 inhabitants / km², the question inevitably arises as to whether it will not represent the new demographic-economic Asia, but this aspect will be dealt with in the next chapter.

	European states	Asian states	African states
	Germany, Italy, Great Britain,	South Korea,	Uganda, Nigeria,
r / es	France, Greece, Holland,	Philippines, Vietnam,	Rwanda, Burundi,
ea	Switzerland, Austria, Portugal, (all	Bangladesh, Sri Lanka,	Malawi, Ethiopia,
e y un	without colonies)	Pakistan, Iraq, United	Ghana, Ivory Coast,
CC	$1,838,000 \text{ km}^2$	Arab Emirates, Kuwait	Senegal
L .	million inhabitants (inhabitants	$2,362,000 \text{ km}^2$	3,193,000 km ²
	per km²)		
1900	190 (100)	70 (30)	40 (12)
2020	313 (170)	718 (300)	484 (150)
2050	~ 331 (180) ~	~ 942 (400) ~	~ 917 (290) ~
2100	~ 329 (180) ~	~ 1.140 (480) ~	~ 1.720 (540) ~

Table 1. Comparison between demographic evolution and population density of some states in Europe, Asia and Africa

Source: Worldometers, 2020; Ilieş and Staşac, 2000; Unsere Welt, 1996

Because 60% of the territory of Asia is inaccessible to large-scale humanization (Central and North Asia, the western half of China and the deserts of Arab, Lut and Thar), it makes the population density on this continent increase to 250 inhabitants / km², so explaining the space crisis it faces and the

need for its member states to exploit the waters, agricultural lands, forests and subsoil resources of other less populated states (Ianos and Iacob, 1989; Findlay and O'Rourke, 2009; Popa, 2004; Der Grosse Marco Polo Weltatlas, 1994; Grand Atlas International Sequoia, 1961). The expansion of Asian influence in the world seems premeditated if we look back at the historical evolution, so the economic boom of more and more states is achieved after a break of only 200 years. Between the years 0 and 1800 China and India represented the largest economic powers in the world, being overtaken after 1800 by Western Europe, where the industrial revolution occurs and thus growing economically colonizes and subjugates most of the world. After 1900, the two heavyweights Asians, are also economically surpassed by the USA (In 1800, the USA surpasses India economically, and in 1900 it will also surpass China). Also in Asia were the great empires: Persian, Arab, Ottoman or Mongol, which in turn invaded parts of Europe when the current US territory was not even discovered. The current extension of Asia's power over partially or fully European states such as Russia, Turkey or Italy is nothing new if we refer only to recent history. Like an iceberg that sits only 20% above the water, Europe with 20% of the surface of Eurasia began to dominate and sink the continent of Asia only after 1500 and defeated it after 1800, which followed representing a sheet of history that seems to be the end (Baten, 2016; Suciu et al., 2010; Allen, 2011; Săgeată, 2008; Hlihor, 2001).

Japan is for Asia a kind of economic and historical Britain for Europe, South Korea resembles the Netherlands, China a kind of Germany, Vietnam with Poland, India a France and Italy, the Persian Gulf states a kind of Norway, Turkey a kind of Spain, Thailand a kind of Romania and so on. Thus we must get used to the idea that the power of the small states as a surface and population of Europe will be reduced in influence and the Asian states will replace them, but on a scale of 4-6 times larger.

It was mistakenly considered that if the West developed a strong and welldeveloped economic, commercial, scientific or cultural system, the people of Asia could not copy it. And those in Asia can build specializations, schools, hospitals or highways, skyscrapers, factories and so on, using raw materials, technology and the export of finished products and culture precisely through globalization based on the West (Mazilu, 2008; Hobson, 2004; Allen, 2011; Frank, 1998). This is how state organizations similar to the Western ones appeared, but also big money banks, so the states here were seen from simple components in a world owned exclusively by the West, in the main actors of their own assemblies where now also European states, America, Africa or Oceania aspires, emphasizing more and more planetary Asianization.

The Asian population explosion is coming to an end, on a continent overpopulated and facing a severe space crisis and very eager to assert itself, with model states to follow from the most diverse and successes that defy the laws of the economy such as: Japan's economic boom since the late twentieth century, with mountainous and volcanic islands, earthquakes or hurricanes, lacking resources and isolated being in the vicinity of hostile China, the USSR and North Korea; Newly developed China, with an area of continental size and colossal population twice as much as the whole of Europe; Taiwan with grave mountainous relief; destructive desert climate such as the United Arab Emirates; territory with blocked land borders such as South Korea or states that are too small in size between so many giants such as Singapore, Bahrain or Brunei. Examples to follow exist and new emerging economies seem to copy them quickly.

If we look at things as they seem to be unfolding today, we could see over the years: the Philippines as the new Japan, Vietnam the new South Korea, Malaysia the new Thailand, Sri Lanka the new Taiwan, Iran the new Saudi Arabia, Iraq the new Kuwait and maybe most amazingly, India becoming the new China. The foundations for the arrival of the continent of Asia among the prosperous areas of the world have already been laid, there is a large population able to work, educated, with access to high technology, concentrated in megacities that are connected by highways and modern or equipped trains, with some of the largest ports or airports on Earth, as well as a growing culture of using finance, sales or domination. Although Europe developed high Western society in 5 centuries and Anglo-Saxon America in just 2, in the last half century the transfer of technology, information and education to Asia has been colossal. forcing tens of millions of workers to work in multinational factories, and specialize in this, as well as the development of the necessary services for these workers with stable incomes. That is why the Asian economic boom with a growth of over 5% per year should not surprise us.

The Asian continent has a number of at least 15 urban agglomerations that together with the periphery exceed the population of Romania, over 30 cities that exceed the population of Hungary, Greece, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Portugal or the Czech Republic and over 55 cities with a population total in excess of the population of countries such as Denmark. Norway or Finland. In other words, the total population of the state capitals: Italy, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Norway, Finland and Denmark together accumulate a population similar or lower to the population of the state capital: China, India, Japan, Korea South, Indonesia, Philippines, Bangladesh or Thailand. We can imagine the magnitude of the development that will be felt in Asia. Just as good products once launched on the market spread like wildfire and were wanted by almost everyone (as was the case with cars, TVs, computers, phones and so on), so consumer goods are making waves in the Asian market forcing the industry to produce at an ever-accelerating pace. "Just as the economic miracle succeeded in Japan, why can't: South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan or Hong Kong?", the inhabitants of these countries asked themselves in the years 1970-2000, and they succeeded. It was the turn of the inhabitants of: China, Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Oman or Bahrain in the years 2000-2020, starting to ask this question now the inhabitants of states such as: India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Philippines, Iran, Kazakhstan, Jordan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh or Indonesia. Pandora's box has opened and progress is in the minds of growing masses of people ready to work hard to get it.

Given the historical evolution of the movement of power in the world, the question arises "Why can't africa follow the economic boom in Asia?"

An analysis of the evolution of world powers is welcome, which will make us reflect more clearly on the ever-changing and unpredictable geopolitics found in recent history, so we can understand, accept more easily and predict the possible trajectories that humanity will have in the next period, without considering the picture of the current world as crystallized and impossible to change.

The Italian powers Genoa and Venice were the economic and commercial poles of Europe and the Mediterranean, dominating the world economy known between 1000 and 1500, convinced that there can be no real danger in the emergence of other powers especially if it was the arid Iberian Peninsula. But the transfer of wealth was made and Spain and Portugal managed after 1492 to dominate the global influence, exceeding all expectations. They came to have large parts of southern and northern Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and present-day parts of France and Germany as well as large areas of the Earth, reaching two empires that accumulated an area almost three times larger than Europe. Only certain momentary opportunities made Spain or Portugal not interested in conquering the English islands or the whole of French territory, which was quite poor at the time compared to the wealth administered by Madrid and Lisbon. But after the years 1600-1700, France expanded an empire that surpassed that of the two powers, and Britain brought the surprise, building the largest empire in world history. With weak economies compared to Spain and Portugal, the new empires find it difficult to set out, conquering only unproductive territories that initially consist of deserted areas of the northern half of North America and the African coast, while the riches of the Incas, Mayans or Indians they end up in the hands of the Iberian powers, which, however, stubbornly consider themselves secured as world superpowers for extended periods, hoping that history will be lenient.

The mistake of the idea that the present will be eternal is repeated again, and France and England who held the USA today, much of Africa and two-thirds of Asia, defy any possible emergence of a great power in the east, especially the Netherlands, the German or Italian states were divided into many self-governing provinces, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire was dominated by two very different peoples and consisted of at least 6 other equally diverse peoples. The possibility of these parts of the world becoming superpowers, without territories held outside Europe, or with insignificant territories, was minimal. The Netherlands was the first star to shine, with a small population, a territory often flooded and restricted between great powers, only with the territories of Brazil, India or South Africa by other European powers, through trade between the French, English, Spanish, and Portuguese colonies, it became by surprise the largest naval power shattering the theory that a country with claims to superpower should have its own overseas territories.

Another surprise comes at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the eastern states, with no substantial access to the seas and oceans, without a developed maritime fleet and with too few colonies owned, do what we could say the Central European miracle. Germany with few colonies in Africa and Austria-Hungary, which has never left Europe territorially, is economically overtaking the West, and this is how the space crisis of mega-powers in Europe is created. The Atlantic powers bring the world's wealth to Europe, while the German states, through developed industry, manage to transfer it to the east. At the same time, a so-called "United States of Europe on the New Earth", appears in North America, founded by the massive migration of Europeans fed up with the long wars at home. Europe had become too small for the powers that divided it. They quickly accepted the new country United States of America and the tension between the Europeans makes the world's attention neglected, and after the US, weak demographically and formed of little humanized lands, appears as a new power attached as an extension of Europe, in the same time in the extremity of Asia far from the great civilizations, the yellow men from the inhospitable Japanese archipelago become ready to take part in the division of the world.

After the two great world conflagrations (First and Second World War) caused by the surprise of new powers (Japan, Austria-Hungary, Germany and Italy), they managed to capture Europe, large parts of Africa, East Asia, Southeast and southern and northern Oceania, colonizing even the mega-powers France and the Netherlands, and almost kneeling England, after the end of the wars remain victorious two states on the periphery of Europe, the US intervening at the end of the war and a new force from the east, Russia, although severely destroyed of war.

Western Europeans had to change theories of education that only colonial empires could dominate the world and give an explanation for the success of the Netherlands, Germany or Austria-Hungary, then they had to give an explanation as to why the US, a non-European state, could be mega-power, and even harder was when they needed an answer to Japan's inexplicable success so linguistically, religiously and culturally different from Europe. After 1945, the emergence of the mega-power of the USSR (Russia) again defied the laws of power, which had an always cold, non-Western territory, with Slavic language and Christian-Orthodox religion and above all, with a system of leadership embodied in communism, very different from the old capitalist system developed over hundreds of years. It developed an empire and influence equal in power and economy with the Western system dominated after 1945 by the United States, being further unexpected proof that the system that existed until then was neither unique nor forever dominant. It took five centuries for Western Europe to dominate the world, only two centuries for the USA, 4 decades for Japan and 3 decades for Russia (USSR). Seemingly invincible in 1980, after only 15 years, Russia becomes far inferior to the United States and begins to outperform itself economically in the next two decades with countries such as Italy or South Korea, often losing competition.

At the end of this half-century in which Russian was the subject of study in many schools around the world, it is beginning to be forgotten by people as if it did not exist, and now it seems natural in the perception of humanity as the European Union that sums it all up the colossal powers of Europe (Italy with Venice and Genoa, Spain, Portugal, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany or Austria and Hungary) together fail to cope economically, decisively or even culturally with US power even if they hold 200 millions more people. It also began to seem natural in the 2000s for Japan, a small island country isolated from the waters of the Pacific Ocean, to dominate the world high-tech market, holding more economic power than France and Britain combined, also surpassing China 5 times, even if it held only 10% of the population they. This shows how absurd the geopolitical world we live in is and how society is educated to agree with the situation it finds itself considering the world to be fair, just and eternal in its form at that time.

After all this shift in world wealth and recent history in major change, it still appears as a shock the development of South Korea beyond Spain or Russia, how can Indonesia, Turkey or Saudi Arabia overtake the Netherlands or newly industrialized China how it arrived to compete economically with the whole of the European Union or the USA, recovering so much in just 20 years. Tomorrow's world will naturally see China's global domination as natural, but it will be shocked by the rise of India, which I now look down on as China looked 20 years ago. Accepting the shift of power on Earth so far and having some prognosis for the coming decades, we can naturally ask whether the power of the world was in the hands of Italians, Spaniards, French, English, Germans in Europe, then Americans or Russians in Eurasia, the Japanese, now in the possession of the Chinese and probably the Indians in the not too distant future, why Africans, referring to Sub-Saharan Africa-Black, why can't it hold some supremacy in the next decade ? Especially since the population of this region will most likely have 40% of the world's population over 80 years, when it will have as much as Asia or 7 times as much as Europe.

Currently, the centers of cities such as Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Luanda, Nairobi, Kinshasa, Lagos, Abidjan, Accra or Addis Ababa rise, in some places, to the level of facilities provided by European cities, and grandiose projects in progress or already completed such as: multiple modern railways, gas pipelines in Chad, Cameroon, Sudan or Nigeria, Grand Inga hydropower plants in Congo and the Great Renaissance Dam on the Blue Nile in Ethiopia, highways in Nigeria, Ivory Coast or Ghana, the technological city of Konza near Nairobi, ports in Kenya (Mombassa) or Tanzania (Dar es Salaam), or almost 500 million internet users, 500 million subscribers and 800 million used SIM cards and almost 300 million smartphones, all of which inconceivable for this territory five decades ago, prove it possible. Why can't these oases of wealth or mega-projects cover larger and larger areas of sub-Saharan Africa? This approach to underestimating this world may be a mistake made so many times in history, when it was falsely considered that certain regions are not entitled to become dominant mega-powers like others.

Table 2. Competition between the three economic and demographic mega-regions of the
world, by various categories, between 1900 and 2100

Source: processed after: Worldometers, 2020; World Integrated Trade Solution, 2020; Parthasarathi, 2011; Canrong, 2020

No.	Region	Approximate area Km²	Population 1900 2020 2100 (Estimate) Millions of inhabitants	Urban agglomerations with over 8 million inhabitants (2020)	GDP Nominal between Years 2000 - 2020 Trillions of US Dollars	GDP Purchasing Power Parity between the years 2000 - 2020 Trillions of US Dollars	Trade (export 2000 - 2020) Trillions of US Dollars
I	Small West (EU, UK, Norway, Switzerland + Anglo-Saxon America, without frozen north)	17 millions	380 870 950	16	20 - 45	20 - 45	3,9 - 7,5
п	Restricted Asia (excluding Russia, Central Asia, Tibet, Gobi and New Guinea)	17 millions	900 4.500 4.500	50	8-31	16 - 65	1,4 - 7,0
III	Restricted Africa (no north with the Sahara desert)	17 millions	110 1.100 4.000	7	0,4 - 2	1,1 - 4,5	0,08- 0,4

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CONCLUSIONS

The seventeenth and nineteenth centuries represented the European demographic boom, the eighteenth and mid-twentieth centuries represented the American population explosion, the twentieth century represented the Asian population boom and the twentieth and twenty-first centuries will be the African population explosion. We are at the end of the Asian population explosion (between 1900 and 2020 the population of Asia has increased 5 times, from 900 to 4,600 million) and in the midst of the African population explosion (between 1900 and 2100, its population will increase 50 times, from 100 million to 5,000 billion). It seems that at the end of the period of population growth, the economic boom appears, as it happens with Europe and America, now with Asia and in the future following the same evolution, it will be Africa's turn.

From any historical point of view, the domination of the West is only a stage of history that is natural to end leaving room for new actors, and the fact that the US depends on the export of finished products from Asia and Europeans looks forward to being part of development programs and New Asian banks (Asian Investment and Infrastructure Bank and New Development Bank), prove how easy it has already been to move from dominator to dominant, Asia being a demographic advantageous continent (5 times more population than the EU, the Great Britain and the US combined) and with 4 of the top 10 world economic powers (after GDP PPP), almost 50% of world GDP PPP and 30 of the top 38 urban agglomerations with peripherals exceeding 20 million inhabitants (Diaconescu and Lung, 2018).

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SENIOR AS ELECTOR AND E-ELECTOR IN COVID 19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract: The aim of the study is to show the senior as a voter and ICT user in particularly difficult conditions of the threat caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. The studies conducted in twenty seven countries and other studies from August 2020 showed that seniors and men are most exposed to the effects of the disease. This article assumes that e-voting is a safe election solution in a pandemic. Digital divide is a factor that still remains correlated with the age of citizens, even in countries considered technologically advanced. As older voters express more confidence in traditional forms of voting, their attitude slows down the implementation of e-voting in electoral systems. It can be seen that the conservative worldview goes hand in hand with the distrust of seniors in e-voting.

Key words: COVID 19, election, e-voting, senior, voting

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INTRODUCTION

The global COVID 19 pandemic has affected members of different social groups to varying degrees. Seniors, whose incidence rate was higher than in other generations, felt the most severely. Each country has adopted a specific policy of protecting seniors, and international organizations for health protection, along with the development of subsequent stages of the pandemic, provided guidelines for authorities and citizens on how to best deal with this emergency. Seniors, as a group particularly exposed to the effects of SARS COV-2 infection, have become not only the addressees of the health prevention policy, but have also been the subject of quasi-sensational media reports, and finally - scientific studies (Daoust, 2020) on the responses of elderly people to the dangers of the pandemic.

The above-mentioned studies conducted in 27^1 countries and other studies from August 2020 showed that seniors and men are most exposed to the effects of the

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disease (Mallapaty, 2020). The analyses showed that although seniors are generally a more disciplined group in relation to other age groups, in the case of life-threatening conditions they adopt much less cautious and responsible attitudes. Isolation, face veil, non-participation in family and social gatherings are not strictly adhered to, which, according to researchers, may result from a temporary or deeply rooted disregard for death, and local and central authorities should take this fact into account in COVID prevention policies. Against the background of insubordination and reckless behaviour of seniors, the example of D. Trump is clearly distinguished, who fell ill on 5 October 2020, and just two days later appeared among voters as a recovering person. This indicates a lack of awareness of the risks associated with later stages of infection, as well as disregard for the health of people for whom it may be a source of infection.

THEORETHICAL REVIEW BASED ON ELECTRONIC VOTING AND ITS RECEPTION

The subject of electronic voting appeared in the scientific discourse and public debate more than twenty years ago in response to attempts of e-voting introduced in the mid-1990s in countries such as Belgium. India and Brazil. Scientific research referred to the experiences of countries that in the first decade of the 21st century implemented e-voting into their electoral systems despite the awareness of the risk (Musial-Karg, 2015). It referred to postal voting, adopted and developed at the earliest in a few countries of the world with well-established mechanisms of direct democracy, and at the same time - with a small population inhabiting a relatively large territory (Australia, Canada). The decision criterion allowing postal voting was thoroughly pragmatic, it was about the convenience of the voters themselves, who did not distract themselves from the routine activities in their place of residence. At the same time, through the act of sending the voice, they expressed their support for the democratic system as well as trust in the state and its missionary institutions (post office). Thus, the procedure perpetuated the feeling of servitude of the state towards society (political liberalism), weakening the conviction about the practices of manipulating the urn (Wendt and Bógdal-Brzezińska 2020). Electronic voting is the next stage of broadening the spectrum of interpretation of what conditions can guarantee the attribute of direct elections. As there are various forms of evoting, one can distinguish voting in polling stations with the use of voting devices connected to the national computing system (allowing for faster counting of results) or without such a connection, but only for digital recording of votes, as well as voting outside polling stations for using devices connected to digital networks admitted for use in the election procedure (Mider, 2011).

The attitude to e-voting (and its variant - i-voting) is as much a function of voters' age correlated with their digital competences, as well as the level of social trust in the presence of digital technologies in election procedures (Yao et al., 2006). There are also competence dilemmas, because while the requirement of correspondence voting was the ability to read and write, in electronic voting, digital illiteracy is a dilemma, which is often faced by the elderly and people living in poverty. Based on research conducted a decade ago in culturally diverse

¹ The following countries are included in the study: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates (UAE), United Kingdom, United States (US) and Vietnam.

countries (Taiwan, Switzerland, Colombia, Argentina), it was concluded that procedures similar to traditional voting (electronic election kiosks) are more trusted than voting using the Internet (Milic et al., 2016; Alvarez et al., 2011). The subjective perception of the safety of election procedures depended on the ease of use of digital tools by voters, the perceived usefulness of their use in elections, and an open attitude to technological innovation (Chiang, 2009; Barthel et al., 2020). On the other hand, in recent years, the relationship between the systems of states using e-voting (especially unstable democracies) and the level of trust in election procedures as a synonym for trust in power has been noticed (Avgerou et al., 2019).

Moreover, in countries that do not use e-voting tools (e.g. in Poland), as a result of generational changes, opinions of young politicians and voters are heard more and more often about the traditional procedure of voting as a manifestation of extreme conservatism of society. The term "electoral gerontocracy" is used as a pejorative example of slowing down the digitization of electoral procedures by senior voters. This is part of the global discourse on the challenges to democracy posed by the digitization of public life (Kneuer, 2016), but at the same time it deepens the psychological aspects of digital exclusion. It is assumed that traditional methods of voting in elections guarantee the participation of an older electorate and eliminate the willingness to participate on the part of young, digitized but impatient voters for whom visiting a polling station is an irritating burden (Goerres, 2007).

RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

This article assumes that e-voting is a safe election solution in a pandemic. They are supported by intergovernmental organizations and integration structures In the official materials of the EU and the Council of Europe, as well as the WHO, the topic of dilemmas concerning the rule of law and maintaining electoral standards in a pandemic has been addressed in recent months. The Council of Europe indicates as a basis for safe and lawful voting Recommendation CM / Rec (2017) 5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on standards for e-voting (Recommendation CM, 2017). The dominant belief is that the key conditions that must be met are gradual testing of the electronic procedure, guarantees of the security of the election procedure, even in the event of cyber-attacks, the reliability of the electronic system at every stage of the procedure, the universal availability of digital tools used in the election procedure and, finally, the state's full responsibility for the conduct of the election process e-elections. There is also a clear message that it is the duty of the authorities to skilfully balance between protecting citizens' health and guaranteeing the rule of law (Voting COVID 19). So although international institutions call for state authorities to ensure optimal voting conditions, it is not always understood, especially in the case of countries whose regimes are clearly authoritarian.

However, older voters, whose security could be enhanced through the use of digital tools, are reluctant to replace traditional voting with e-voting. It is influenced by various factors, including the level of digital competences, the level of trust in ICT, and finally the specificity of decision-making by seniors (including election decisions). Therefore, a thesis will be put forward that in countries that do not have legal regulations allowing e-voting, the older electorate approves and maintains the existing state of affairs with its attitudes.

AGE FACTOR AS A DETERMINATION OF ELECTORAL DECISIONS SENIORS FOR MODERN TECHNOLOGIES

The age factor turns out to be an important vector of the attitude towards elections in their traditional and remote form. In many countries without legal regulations on electronic voting, a discussion has developed in recent years on the legitimacy of the digitization of elections, the background of which were generational changes among voters. For example, in Poland, as early as 2010, there was a discussion on lowering the age of potential voters to the age of 16. Experts dealing with scientific political processes took part in the debate. In an interview for the "Polityka" (weekly magazine), K. Skarżyńska, professor of political psychology, emphasized that the age factor plays one of the most important roles in the processes of political decision-making, and the mechanisms governing the decisions of young people radically differ from the decisions of seniors (Skarżyńska, 2010). She pointed out that both groups considered the environment that the researcher had tentatively divided into family and peers as a significant variable. While young people trying to emancipate from the family environment seek to get closer to their peers, which results in potential decisions imitating the choices of peers, seniors show a farreaching readiness to make autonomous decisions in relation to the family and peer environment. In the latter case, life experience plays a significant role, which will be discussed later, which, in connection with education, constitutes a strong foundation for separate views and individualized identity. Simply put, it is easier for seniors to consciously keep separate views and defend them.

At the same time, studies on the impairment of perception and cognition under the influence of aging confirm the decline in the ability to remember and associate. It is alleged that this indirectly influences "information processing and decision-making strategies by older citizens. In a study on political candidate evaluation processes in elections, "older people used less information, but it took more time to check and make a choice" (Riggle and Johnson, 1996). This was in line with previous research, indicating a specific generational methodology of acquiring knowledge by seniors. They showed that older people spend more time searching for information and making decisions, look for less available information, are more systematic or strategic in their searches, which results from their experience, and they are less excited about news and less often change their worldview (including political preferences), and the selection of the sought information serves to increase knowledge organized in a specific way. The latter feature corresponds to the above-mentioned relatively high decisionmaking autonomy. In the case of online voting, comparisons of the attractiveness of this method for young adults (18-25) and seniors (over 60) in US resulted in a clear differentiation of opinions (Powell et al., 2012).

For comparison - in the research on the methodology of election decisions of seniors in the USA twenty years ago, differences resulting from the adaptation potential and the state of consciousness of this group were noticed (Binstock, 2000). Above all, however, there was a high voter turnout of seniors, which made them a reliable electorate, the number of voters over 65 years increased by 5% between the mid-1960s and the mid-1990s, which results both from the higher percentage of seniors in the national population and declining participation in elections by younger generations. In 2016, the number of active voters in the US over 65 years was 27%, and the percentage of members of electoral commissions in the same age group was 58%. It should be concluded that in democratic

countries seniors are the iron electorate, willingly and confidently participating in the election procedure.

If we follow the electoral activity of seniors in countries such as Poland, where e-voting does not exist, it will be easy to notice the relationship between the declared level of digital competences and the distrust of digitization of elections and right-wing voting preferences (Ścigaj, 2019). According to a study by the Central Statistical Office in Poland entitled "The use of information and communication technologies in households in 2019" 53,2% of people aged 65+ have never used the Internet, and 82% of this group did not feel such a need. In studies conducted in Poland around the generational division of digital competences for the 65+ age group, results were obtained showing the lack of interest in ICT.

gospodarstwach domowych w 2019 roku - część 3, 2020, GUS: Warszawa				
Age Digital competences	65-74			
Not using the internet	53,2%			
Lack competences	11,7%			
Low competences	26,2%			
Basic competences	6,9%			
Above average competences	2,0%			

Table 1. Digital competences of polish seniors Source: own calculation based on: Wykorzystanie technologii informacyjno-komunikacyjnych w

The traditional way of obtaining information does not go hand in hand with being open to digital technologies and the Internet. Polish seniors obtain their knowledge first of all from public media, which is the most accessible channel of information, and for people over 75 - completely free. Public media, under the control of the ruling right wing, emit a message saturated with patriotic and religious content, consistent with the world view of the majority of older viewers and listeners. The relationship between age and the dominant world view translates into the voting preferences of this group. This is also shown by the results of the parliamentary elections in Poland in 2019, when: in the group of people aged 50-59, the conservative coalition called the United Right obtained 51% of the votes; centrist Civic Coalition - 26.3%; Polish People's Party, traditionally associated with the rural electorate - 9.9%; the postcommunist Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej - 9.2%, and the nationalist-liberal Confederation - 2.8%. The United Right gained the greatest support among people aged over 60, where 55.6% of voters voted for this party, the Civic Coalition received 25.3% of support in this group, the Democratic Left Alliance -10%, the Polish People's Party - 7.4 %, while the Confederation - 1.1%. In total, among retirees and disability pensioners, the right-wing groups obtained 56.8% of the vote against 24.5% for the Civic Coalition, 10.3% for the Democratic Left Alliance, 6.8% for the Polish People's Party and only 1.1% for the Confederation.

Similarly, on June 28, 2020, the presidential election in Poland was won by Andrzej Duda, associated with the right-wing option, reaching 58% of the votes among voters over 60 years, whose turnout was estimated at 56.1%.

Andrzej Duda is now 48 years old, he is a relatively young president. It can be noticed, however, that conservative older Polish voters willingly vote for their peers. When the law lowering the retirement age was introduced in 2017, 38 MPs and 33 MPs (mostly from the right) were included in the group covered by the new regulations. At the end of the term of office in 2019, 51 out of 131 members of parliament and 69 out of 329 members were of retirement age. The age profile of members of the Polish parliament is not conducive to initiating a legislative debate on the introduction of e-voting and results in the lack of effective solutions in a crisis situation such as the COVID 19 pandemic.

CONCLUSION

Digital divide is a factor that still remains correlated with the age of citizens, even in countries considered technologically advanced. As older voters express more confidence in traditional forms of voting, their attitude slows down the implementation of e-voting in electoral systems. It can be seen that the conservative worldview goes hand in hand with the distrust of seniors in e-voting. This distrust is structural and long-term, so in an intense but sudden threat of COVID 19, it does not affect readiness to replace direct voting at polling stations with electronic voting.

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THE RELIGIOUS STRUCTURAL EVOLUTION OF THE APUSENI MOUNTAINS

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Abstract: This paper aims to analyse the religious structure and its evolution in the Apuseni Mountains (Romania). Thusly, we employed statistical data from three distinct population censuses, the first one being the Austro-Hungarian census of 1880. The next one was the one in 1930, organised by Romanian authorities. Furthermore, it was the first and most important demographic census after the Great Union of 1918. The last census taken into consideration was the one in 2011, the second census of the 21st century. After obtaining the numerical data from the three censuses, we processed it using Microsoft Excel. Three tables were generated, emphasizing the numerical values and the percentages for each religion or confession for each census. The map depicting the geographic location of the study area was developed using GIS technology (ArcGis 10.3). We determined that Christians have been dominating the Apuseni Mountains and the Orthodox faith had and still has the most adherents. Likewise, the political-administrative factor heavily influenced census operations and also produced imbalances in the religious structure, especially after the 1948 abolition of the monarchy.

Key words: religious structure, evolution, Apuseni Mountains, Romania, censuses

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INTRODUCTION

This study aims to create an analysis of the religious structural evolution of the Apuseni Mountains, employing data from three separate population censuses. The first census we used was the one in 1880, organised by the Austrian-Hungarian authorities. The second census we used was the one in

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1930, which was the first and most important demographic study after the historical moment of the 1918 Great Union. The last census utilized was the one in 2011, the second population census of the 21st century. Moreover, we aim to identify certain causes which led to increases or decreases in different religious communities, from one census to another.

The study of religions/confessions is a well established and researched field in Romania. For Banat, Transilvania, Crișana and Maramureș, the religious phenomenon has been studied alongside other phenomena, such as ethnicity and electoral behaviour (Bodocan, 2001; Crețan, 1999; Ilieș, 1998, Ilieș et al., 2020). Other studies focused on the religious structure of Mures County in 2011 (Tofan, 2014), as well as Covasna, Harghita and Mures counties as a whole (Tofan et al., 2014), and the concurrent study of ethnicity, religion and electoral behaviour in Covasna, Harghita and Mures counties between 2008-2014 (Tofan, 2015). Another engaging study was focused on ethnicity, religion, and marriage in north-western Transylvania (Sisestean, 2002). A simultaneous look on religion and ethnicity in Petrosani Depression emphasized an ethnical and religious continuity between 1850-2011 (Lung, 2019), respectively the study of ethnicity and religions in mining centres in the Banat Mountains (Lung and Muresan, 2020). Religious structure has been carefully investigated, from multiple perspectives, by various researchers from many other countries (Basedau et al., 2011; King and Furrow, 2004; Menjívar, 1999; Meyer, 2009; Olajubu, 2004; Olson et al., 2006; Pollard, 2009; Todd and Allen, 2011; Weightman, 1993; Williams and Wright, 2015; Wilson and Janoski, 1995).

STUDY AREA

Apuseni Mountains are part of the Western Carpathians, as well as a component of the Romanian Carpathians. They include areas from six different counties: Alba, Arad, Bihor, Cluj, Hunedoara, and Sălaj. From an administrative standpoint, Apuseni Mountains comprise 153 territorial units, 140 being communes (rural areas), while 13 are classified as towns and cities (urban areas). In order to devise a better territorial analysis, we divided the space of the Apuseni Mountains into six regional subsystems: Alba Apuseni, Arad Apuseni, Bihor Apuseni, Cluj Apuseni, Hunedoara Apuseni and Sălaj Apuseni.



Figure 1. Geographic location of Apuseni Mountains (Source: own study)

METHODOLOGY

The statistical data needed for our study is part of population census 1880 (Rotariu et al., 1997), 1930 (Rotariu et al., 2011), 2011 (NIS). Data was later processed using Microsoft Excel, which generated tables for each census we used. We utilized GIS technology (ArcGis 10.3) to generate the map for the location of the Apuseni Mountains (figure 1) and to make maps with the distribution of religions/confessions for each administrative-territorial unit.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Religious structure of the Apuseni Mountains at the 1880 census

At the 1880 census (table 1, figure 2), two major religions were registered in Apuseni, Christian and Judaism. However, this result is rather strange as no person of Jewish ethnicity has been registered at that census, but 4.900 people were registered as having a Judaic religion.

Religions	Religious denominations	Total number	Percentage %
Christian	Orthodox	366.217	76
	Greek-Catholic 67.521		14.01
	Roman-Catholic	16.648	3.45
	Reformed (Calvinist)	23.022	4.78
	Evangelical (Lutheran)	514	0.11
	Unitarian	3.014	0.63
Jewish/Mosaic		4.900	1.02
Other		35	0.01

Table 1. Religious structure in the Apuseni Mountains at the 1880 census(Source: data processed based on Rotariu et al., 1997)



Figure 2. Distribution of religions/confessions for each administrative-territorial unit in 1880 (Source: data processed based on Rotariu et al., 1997)

Orthodox was the largest group - 76 %, (at the 2011 census it had already reached 80%). Besides Orthodox, other denominations include: Greek-Catholics - 14.01 %, Reformed - 4.78 % and Roman-Catholic - 3.45 %.

Despite having 4.900 registered Jewish/Mosaic adherents, their regional percentage was only 1.02 %.

Four anomalies were recorded at local levels in terms of Orthodox territorial distribution - no Orthodox registered in four administrative-territorial units. It is the case of Şinteu commune from Bihor Apuseni as well as Halmăşd, Sâg and Valcău de Jos in the Sălaj Apuseni. Likewise, four administrative units recorded 100 % Orthodox adherents (Ștei from Bihor Apuseni, Blăjeni and Bulzeștii de Sus from Hunedoara Apuseni, Mărişel and Râșca in Cluj Apuseni).

The second most important religious group in Apuseni was Greek-Catholic, having a homogenous distribution within this mountain region, in larger or smaller local communities. Greek-Catholics were predominant in 20 territorial units (Băişoara, Beiuş, Bistra, Borod, Cizer, Galda de Jos, Gilău, Halmăşd, Iara, Întregalde, Livezile, Mărgău, Nucet, Plopiş, Poieni, Poşaga, Săcuieu, Sâg, Vadu Crișului, and Valcău de Jos). Therefore, areas with major Greek-Catholic presence and influence were found in Alba, Cluj and Sălaj Apuseni. Moreover, there were significant Greek-Catholic communities in Bihor Apuseni, while in Arad and Hunedoara Apuseni this denomination had an insular characteristic. The greatest majorities were recorded in units from Sălaj Apuseni, with percentages above 90 % in four communes (Cizer 97 %, Halmăşd 96 %, Sâg 97 %, Valcău de Jos 91 %). The largest Greek-Catholic community was in Mărgău -Cluj Apuseni, 3.562 people.

The majority of the Reformed denomination was located in Cluj and Bihor Apuseni, two communes from these areas managing to maintain a strong continuity until the 2011 census. Thusly, the communes of Izvoru Crișului and Sâncraiu from the Cluj Apuseni had been dominated by Reformed adherents for the entire period. At the 1880 census, Reformed constituents reached 64 % in Izvoru Crișului and 59 % in Sâncraiu. Their representation continued to gradually increase until 2011. Three other territorial units held a vast majority of Reformed: Finiș and Huedin with 56 % and 78 % respectively, while the difference between Reformed and Greek-Catholics in Săvădisla was only three percentage points (39, respectiv 36 %).

The fourth largest religious group of the Apuseni Mountains was Roman-Catholic, dominating Şinteu (99 %) and having a strong presence in Aleşd (38 %) in Bihor Apuseni. In Şinteu, the Slovak community declared itself as Roman-Catholic, as did the Hungarian community of Aleşd. Roman-Catholic communities with more than 1.000 people were also recorded in Certeju de Sus, Roşia Montană and Plopiş, where Roman and Greek- Catholics reached percentages of 44% and 54 %.

An exceptional case was the Unitarian community of Rimetea commune, Alba Apuseni, the only administrative unit in the Apuseni Mountains with a Unitarian majority - 84 %. This denomination succeeded in preserving its faith for the entire period at hand and it remains the only case in Apuseni Mountains where Hungarians adopted Unitarianism.

Jewish communities were scattered and small, the majority being comprised of less than 100 people. This religious group was poorly represented in Sălaj Apuseni, with only 297 recorded people. The largest subregional community however was found in the Bihor Apuseni, with 1.545 Jewish adherents, followed by communities in the Arad Apuseni with 1.003 people, Cluj Apuseni - 984, Hunedoara Apuseni - 617 and Alba Apuseni - 454.

Religious structure of the Apuseni Mountains at the 1930 census

At the 1930 census (table 2, figure 3), the religious structure of the Apuseni was divided into Christian and Judaism. The most extensive was the Christian faith, with several well established denominations scattered across the region.

There were 436.891 Orthodox believers, meaning a value of 73.57 % of the entire population. However, there were several anomalies in its distribution in 23 administrative-territorial units (Băișoara, Bistra, Borod, Cizer, Finiș, Galda de Jos, Halmăşd, Huedin, Izvoru Crișului, Întregalde, Livezile, Mărgău, Plopiș, Poieni, Rimetea, Săcuieu, Săvădisla, Sâg, Sâncraiu, Șinteu, Uileacu de Beiuş, Vadu Crișului, Valcău de Jos); thusly, Orthodox adherents did not form the majority in these areas, being the second most numerous community. The largest Orthodox local community was located in the Arad Apuseni, with a total of 10.767 in the commune of Târnova. In contrast, two communes, Şinteu from the Bihor Apuseni and Halmăşd from Sălaj Apuseni, recorded 9 and respectively 8 registered Orthodox. In 1930, there were three 100 per cent Orthodox communes (Blăjeni, Bulzeștii de Sus, Ceru-Băcăinți).

The Greek-Catholic community registered 89.265 people, or 15.03 %. 16 administrative units did not record a single Greek-Catholic adherent in 1930 (Blăjeni, Brazii, Bulzeștii de Sus, Câmpani, Ceru-Băcăinți, Dieci, Hălmăgel, Ignești, Lazuri de Beiuș, Luncoiu de Jos, Poiana Vadului, Pomezeu, Râmeț, Ribița, Tomești, Vadu Moților). The commune of Poieni from the Cluj Apuseni had the largest Greek-Catholic community, comprised of 6.119 people. Greek-Catholic were generally located in the Cluj and Sălaj Apuseni mountains, where they had established large communities. 49.99 % of the total number of Greek-Catholics lived in the 23 administrative units of these two areas. 31.89 % were found in the settlements of the Cluj Apuseni and 18.10 % in Sălaj Apuseni. Greek-Catholics also formed religious majorities in 15 territorial units (Băișoara, Bistra, Borod, Cizer, Galda de Jos, Halmăşd, Întregalde, Livezile, Mărgău, Poieni, Săcuieu, Sâg, Uileacu de Beiuş, Vadu Crișului, Valcău de Jos).

The Apuseni Mountains witnessed several religious mutations at the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century. The Greek-Catholic majority recorded in Mărgău, at the 1930 census, took shape as numerous Orthodox Romanians converted to Greek-Catholicism. The event took place in 1774, during the canonical visit of Bishop Grigore Maior to Someş Valley. The bishop's visit took place between 10th August and 10th September, during which 40 villages converted to the Greek-Catholic faith. As a sign of gratitude, Grigore Maior raised Mărgău Parish at the rank of archpriestship in 1780. The Greek-Catholic community thrived until 1948, the dawn of the communist era foreshadowing confessional mutations. In 1948, the Greek-Catholic population was reconverted to Orthodoxism, as the Greek-Catholic church faced persecution (Şematismul veneratului cler al Archidiecesei metropolitane greco-catolice române de Alba-Iulia şi Făgăraş pre anul Domnului 1900 : de la Sânta Unire 200).

Reformed (calvinists) had the third largest population at the 1930 census. Reformed communities registered 4.94 % in the Apuseni Mountains, their total number reaching 29.308 adherents. 25 administrative units did not register any Reformed whatsoever. But they formed the majority in five units (Finiş, Huedin, Izvoru Crişului, Săvădisla, Sâncraiu). Large Reformed communities with more than 1.000 people were recorded in three other areas (Aleşd, Căpuşu Mare, Tărcaia). Thusly, one can observe that the largest and best structured Reformed communities were located in the Bihor and Cluj Apuseni Mountains.

The total number of Roman-Catholics was 21.300 people, with a percentage of 3.59 %. Only four administrative units registered Roman-Catholics communities with more than 1.000 people (Borod, Plopiş, Şilindia, Şinteu). In Plopiş commune from Sălaj Apuseni and Şinteu from Bihor Apuseni, Roman-Catholics formed the majority. 22 administrative units did not record any Roman-Catholics at the 1930 census.

Baptists recorded 1.34 %, with a total of 7.975 adherents. Most Baptist communities had fewer than 100 people, missing from only 31 territorial units. Dieci commune, located in Arad Apuseni had the largest Baptist community in the entire Apuseni Mountains, with 582 people. In 1930, 59.16 % of the entire Apuseni Baptist population was located in the Arad Apuseni.

The First World War was the main factor which influenced the territorial diversification of the Baptist community. Many soldiers had returned from the front already converted to Baptism. Up to the war, Baptists were mostly found in urban areas, but the war itself created the premises for the denomination to geographically spread out across rural areas. The war basically and decisively influenced the collective demographic mentality, by creating a framework of acceptance and expansion of new religions, such as Baptism. The main missionaries of this denomination were the soldiers who returned to their homes after the war, and who were adamant that this religion might be suitable for creating a better life. The faith spread by converting family members, neighbours, as well as acquaintances. When this was done, church members went to preach in other settlements far and wide (Bodeanu, 2009, pp. 53-55).

Unitarians reached 0.46 %, and a population of 2.759 people. This denomination was found in 38 administrative units, the largest community being in Rimetea, Alba Apuseni. The Unitarians of Rimetea registered 70.46 % of the total number of unitarians in the entire Apuseni Mountains. The second largest Unitarian community was Iara, but with fewer adherents than in Rimetea, only 430 people.

There were 590 Evangelicals in the Apuseni Mountains, that is a percentage of 0.10 %. The largest Evangelical - Lutheran community was in Geoagiu, the Hunedoara Apuseni, with a total of 140 adherents at the 1930 census. Despite its fewer numbers in the Apuseni, Lutherans were present in 67 administrative-territorial units. In many such units, there were fewer than five adherents per unit.

Adventists was the least represented faith in the Apuseni Mountains at this particular census. Only 122 Adventists were recorded and the largest Adventist community was the one in Târnova, the Arad Apuseni, with 30 people. Their percentage was solely 0.02 %. However, Adventists were recorded in 20 administrative units in the Apuseni Mountains, many settlements with fewer than 3 people.

Jewish communities formed a regional populational mass of 5.610 people. They were rather evenly distributed at a regional level, in smaller or larger communities. The largest Jewish community was located in the Cluj Apuseni, in the town of Huedin. Here, there were 1.026 adherents in 1930, 18.29 % of the entire regional community. Jews were not found and recorded in 35 administrative units. Judaism held a 0.95~% in the religious structure of the Apuseni Mountains at the 1930 census.

This regional community was broken in 1942. The Jews from Huedin were first deported to Baia-Mare, and to Russia and the Ukraine in 1943. The final deportation of Huedin Jews began on 3rd May 1944, when all adherents were taken to the camps of Birkenau-Auschwitz in Poland. Deportations took place across the entire Huedin area and it is believed that roughly 1.200 people were taken to the camps, only around 100 surviving the war and later settling in Israel (Filip & Matis, 2014, p. 326).

(Source, data processed based on Rotariu et al., 1997)				
Religions	Religious denominations	Total	Percentage (%)	
Christian	Orthodox	436.891	73.57	
	Greek-Catholic	89.265	15.03	
	Reformed (Calvinist)	29.308	4.94	
	Roman-Catholic		3.59	
	Baptist	7.975	1.34	
	Unitarian	2.759	0.46	
	Evangelical (Lutheran)	590	0.10	
	Adventism	122	0.02	
Jewish		5.610	0.95	

Table 2. Religious structure of Apuseni Mountains at the 1930 census
(Source: data processed based on Rotariu et al., 1997)



Figure 3. Distribution of religions/confessions for each administrative-territorial unit in 1930 (Source: data processed based on Rotariu et al., 1997)

The 1918 Union also brought some corrections in terms of the local religious structures found in the Apuseni Mountains. Thusly, at the first census conducted by Romanian authorities, in 1930, every administrative-territorial unit had an Orthodox community. It was the time for the millenial Orthodox tradition of the Apuseni to be fully reinstated. Compared to 1880, a new denomination was registered in 1930 (Baptists), with a relatively high number of followers. Other religious changes proved inconsequential compared to 1880. Religious dysfunctionalities would appear only after 1948, when the monarchy was abolished and replaced by a socialist regime.

Religious structure of the Apuseni Mountains at the 2011 census

At the 2011 census (table 3, figure 4), the religious structure of the Apuseni was more diverse, divided into three major religions: Christian, Muslim, and Judaism. Christians expanded across this vast space as new denominations began to emerge, especially after the fall of communism in 1989.

The percentage of Orthodox was higher than in 1930, reaching 83.69 %, as a continuous christalisation of Orthodoxism began to gradually take place in the Apuseni. If in 1930 only three administrative units were 100 % Orthodox, at the 2011 census, their number increased to five (Ceru-Băcăinti, Ocolis, Ponor, Râmet, Scărisoara). All of these settlements are located in the Alba Apuseni, mirrroring the massive Romanisation and Orthodox christianisation of the Central Apuseni. Another aspect that must be taken into account is the significant decrease of areas where the Orthodox faith did not occupy first place in the religious roster at the 1930 census. Therefore, from 23 administrative units in 1930, it went to just 4 in 2011, as they had preserved their religious structure - Izvoru Crisului, Săvădisla, Sâncraiu, Sinteu. The religious and ethnic structure of the first three communes is dominated by Hungarians, while Sinteu by Slovaks.

The second denomination was surprinsingly the Pentecostals, with a value of 5.88 % and a total number of followers of 22.539. It is without a doubt the denomination with the sharpest increase. The largest Pentecostal community in the Apuseni Mountains was recorded in Târnova from the Arad Apuseni, with 1.471 people. The next large local Pentecostal community is located in the Bihor Apusenii, Dobrești commune, with 1.393 followers. These are the only Pentecostal communities with more than 1.000 members. There are however several local communities between 300-1.000 people. In 24 administrative units, there was no record of any Pentecostal adherent.

The Reformed denomination had lost by 2011, 43.79 % of its entire regional population, reaching 4.30 %. There were 7 administrative units with more than 1.000 members (Aleşd, Căpuşu Mare, Finiş, Huedin, Izvoru Crişului, Săvădisla, Sâncraiu). Reformed form a majority in the last three areas. In Izvoru Crişului and Sâncraiu, both located in Cluj Apuseni, the Reformed community registered 80 % of the total population, which entails a strong rooting in the area. Huedin has the largest Reformed community in the Apuseni Mountains, with 2.484 people. These three administrative units basically form the largest Reformed core, the administrative proximity being beneficial to the establishment of this religious community. The largest subregional Reformed community was located in the Cluj Apuseni, recording at the 2011 census 56.38 % of the entire regional mass. The smallest communities were recorded in the Sălaj Apuseni, with only 69 adherents, in the commune of Valcău de Jos.

The protocol of the meeting held on 2nd September 1948 by the Reformed Council contained two decrees issued by the Grand National Assembly, which dispossessed the church from all of its educational assets. From that moment on, the Reformed church was to be supressed; all the schools and later all the churches became state administered. Alongside churches, other buildings, lands and forests were confiscated as well. Thusly, extrareligious activities ceased immediately and Reformed communities were isolated and impoverished. However, despite significant decreases in followers, several local communities like the ones in Izvoru Crișului and Sâncraiu survived relatively intact (Lukács, 2008, p. 125).

The number of Baptists increased compared to 1930 by 10.90 %, reaching a percentage of 2.31% in 2011. In the Bihor Apuseni, in Aleşd, the largest Baptist community in the Apuseni Mountains numbered 782 people in 2011. 45.07 % of the regional Baptist community is geographically located in the Bihor Apuseni, while 36.25 % can be found in the Arad Apuseni. The Baptist faith had basically settled the western part of the Apuseni Mountains, mostly in depression areas ("gulf depressions") (Zărand, Beiuş, Vad-Borod) and between the Western Hills and the mountains.

During the communist period, the Baptist faith received no funds whatsoever from the state budget; moreover, the regime succeeded in controlling Baptist churches and imposed several restrictive measures. The aim was to bankrupt and liquidate the Baptist patrimony, by outlawing churches which might have made mistakes in the management of their financial funds (Ban, 2004 quoted by Bodeanu, 2007, p. 31). Despite the hardships and lack of funds, the number of Baptist followers began to increase in the 1970s. Baptists even managed to prosper with the help of outside aid, mostly from Austria and the Netherlands. After the fall of communism in 1989, Baptists flourished, now unhindered by restrictive policies (Bodeanu, 2007).

By the 2011 census, Roman-Catholics had lost 66.67 % of their regional communities, registering 1.85 %. In the Bihor Apuseni, in Aleşd, lives the largest Roman-Catholic community in the Apuseni, with 1.828 adherents, or 25.75 % of all Roman-Catholics in these mountains. The territory once occupied by this denomination gradually shrunk until 2011, only Aleşd surpassing 1.000 people, compared to 1930 when there were four administrative units with more than 1.000 Roman-Catholics. Furthermore, a significant decrease in Roman-Catholic presence took place in the commune of Plopiş, by 67.39 % (Sălaj Apuseni), where they dominated in 1930. The denomination endured relatively unchanged only in the commune of Şinteu, Bihor Apuseni.

The socialist regime divided the Roman-Catholic Church in two: the priests still loyal to the Holy See and those who collaborated with the new regime. The arrest of Roman-Catholic bishop Áron Márton was the starting point of a restrictive period for this faith. Further arrests and sentences were passed to all of his successors. Their resistance and fight meant that the normal management of religious buildings could no longer be attained. This dark period left its mark by disintegrating religious communities, with repercussions felt even after the fall of communism in 1989. During the democratic period, interest in Roman-Catholic values began to fade, local communities grew older, and many adherents began migrating abroad (Zamfir and Nóda, 2008). The result of socialist policies was a significant decrease - 66.67 % - of the regional community of the Apuseni Mountains, recorded at the 2011 census.

The most important religious transformation was the decrease of the Greek-Catholic population by 95.69 % between 1930 and 2011, when it reached only 1 % at regional level. If in 1930 there were administrative units with strong Greek-Catholic majorities, in 2011 this denomination no longer held any importance. The largest local community was recorded in Finiş - Bihor Apuseni, comprised of
461 people, much lower than in 1930, when the largest Greek-Catholic community numbered 6.119 people and was located in Poieni, Cluj Apuseni.

Greek-Catholics began facing extreme hardship in 1948, when (on 1st December), the Greek-Catholic Church was dissolved by decree. During the same year, drastic measures were taken. On 18th July 1948, the Concordat with the Holy See was annulled and on 3rd August, all Greek-Catholic educational institutions were closed. The most brutal measure was the arrest of six Greek-Catholic bishops, followed by the closure of all Greek-Catholic monasteries (Soica, 2008, pp. 176-177). Between 27th-30th September 1948, the largest anti Greek-Catholic act perpetrated by the communists took place. Using disinformation and terror, communists made a list of 430 Greek-Catholic clerics who had signed for "the conversion" to Orthodoxism (Moisin, 1998, p. 7). "The signing" of this list struck the local Greek-Catholic communities from the Apuseni Mountains, and alongside with outlawing Greek-Catholicism, it decisively contributed to the disintegration of this church. The list of 430 signatories included clerics from the entire geographic space of the Apuseni Mountains, the destruction of these communities probably being an objective of the regime. The Greek-Catholics had been a community with strong roots in the area since the time of the Habsburgs. Although the Greek-Catholic faith had been reinstated after 1990, the regional community was almost non-existent at the 2011 census, with several local communities entirely gone, such as: Balsa, Băita, Belis, Bucuresci, Budureasa, Căbesti, Căpusu Mare, Curătele, Dezna, Dobrești, Gurahonț, Hălmagiu, Hărău, Hășmaș, Ignești, Izvoru Crișului, Întregalde, Lunca, Măguri-Răcătău, Mărisel, Mogos, Ocolis, Petris, Pietroasa, Pleșcuța, Ponor, Râșca, Roșia, Săvârșin, Șilindia, Șinteu, Șoimi, Tărcaia, Vața de Jos, Vârfurile, and Zam.

Adventism prospered between 1930 and 2011, increasing its "flock" from 122 to 1.141, or a percentage of 0.30 % in the Apuseni. The Arad Apuseni had 56.53 % of the entire Apuseni area, the largest community being Archiş, with 144 people.

Another growing denomination was Jehova's Witnesses, with no recorded adherents in 1930. After 1989 however, 1.114 people joined this faith. The recorded value of the group was 0.29% in 2011. Despite its small size, it is well spread across the Apuseni region, with countless communities of up to 10 people. In Iara, Cluj Apuseni, there were 190 Jehova's Witnesses.

Unitarians went into regress compared to 1930, with a value of 0.23% in 2011, for the entirety of the Apuseni Region. Rimetea, in the Alba Apuseni, still held the largest community in the area - 89,43 %. Likewise, it has been the only commune with a Unitarian majority, in 1930 as well as 2011.

Another denomination which went through a progressive disappearance was Lutheran, In 2011 there were only 19 Evangelicals in the Apuseni: 13 in Geoagiu, Hunedoara Apuseni, and three people in Gilău and Iara each, in the Cluj Apuseni.

At the 2011 census, three new denominations were recorded, which had not been registered in 1930. However, their numbers are reduced. Evangelicalism had 476 followers, while Old Rite Christians and the Serbian Orthodox numbered 58 and 19 followers respectively.

The second most numerous religion, after Christianity, was Muslim (Islam), with 46 recorded followers in the Apuseni mountain range at the 2011 census. They were distributed across 10 administrative units (Aleşd, Beiuş, Brad,

Criscior, Geoagiu, Gilău, Ilia, Petriș, Săvârșin, and Vințu de Jos). However, their community is small and scaterred, with little influence on the religious structure and life of these areas.

Religions	Religious denominations	Total	Percentage (%)
Christian	Orthodox	320.894	83.69
	Roman-Catholic	7.099	1.85
	Reformed (Calvinist)	16.474	4.30
	Pentecostal	22.539	5.88
	Greek-Catholic	3.844	1
	Baptist	8.845	2.31
	Adventist	1.141	0.30
	Unitarian	899	0.23
	Jehova's Witnesses	1.114	0.29
	Evangelicalism	476	0.12
	Old rite Christian	58	0.02
	Evangelical (Lutheran)	19	0.00
	Serbian Orthodox	19	0.00
Muslim		46	0.01
Jewish		10	0.00

Table 3. Religious structure of the Apuseni Mountains at the 2011 census (Source: data processed based on National Institute of Statistics)



Figure 4. Distribution of religions/confessions for each administrative-territorial unit in 2011 (Source: data processed based on National Institute of Statistics)

Judaism had faced persecution in the past, standing on the brink of disappearance from the Apuseni mountain space at the 2011 census. In 1930, the Jewish community numbered more than 5.500 people, while in 2011 its numbers decreased to just 10. Persecutions during the war forced many Jews to declare themselves Christian, converting to other denominations such as Reformed and Roman Catholic. Others were arrested and sent to labour / extermination camps. It is clear that political and historical events put their mark on the vanishing of the Jewish faith in the Apuseni Mountains.

The political changes after the end of the Second World War had immediate repercussions on the religious structure of the Apuseni Mountains. These changes were enforced through coercion policies introduced immediately after communists had assumed power. Therefore, Greek-Catholics and Roman-Catholics were impacted the most by the religious reforms of the new regime. During the socialist period, the followers of these two denominations decreased in numbers, but were not the only ones to have suffered, as the state promoted atheism altered religious structure, especially Christian faiths. As Greek-Catholicism and Roman-Catholicism had been outlawed, many of its followers converted to Orthodoxism, thus increasing Orthodox ranks - 83.69 %. An infamous example is the commune of Mărgău, located in the Cluj Apuseni, which, in 1880, had the largest local Greek - Catholic community, comprised of 3.562 people. At the 2011 census, the local community was comprised of only people. Likewise, major mutations took place in Roman-Catholic 20 communities, their numbers decreasing significantly between 1880 and 2011. In 1880, in the old mining town of Rosia Montană, there was a Roman-Catholic community comprised of 1.076 people. Only 57 people had joined this denomination by 2011.

The Reformed faith also faced difficulties, as it had been replaced in many administrative units as the most numerous denomination. Thusly, until 2011, Reformed kept their standing in only three territorial units: Izvoru Crișului, Sâncraiu and Săvădisla. In the first two communes, consolidated its position reaching local values of 79 %, and 76 % respectively, compared to 1880 when they registered only 64 % and 59 %. The most significant decrease in the number of Reformed believers from the Apuseni Mountains took place in Huedin, where the census recorded only 28% in 2011 compared to 78 % in 1880. After the collapse of the communist regime in 1989, the religious structure diversified, new denominations began to arise, while some gained even more believers and followers. It is the case of the Pentecostal Church, which quickly spread in several areas of the Arad and Bihor Apuseni. Likewise, the faith of Jehova's Witnesses managed to form a regional community of 1.114 people, but with a heterogenous distribution across the Apuseni, most local communities having fewer than 50 members.

CONCLUSIONS

Christianity has dominated the geographic space of the Apuseni Mountains, at each of the three above mentioned population censuses. The dominant element has been Orthodoxism, followed by Greek-Catholicism. Unfortunately, the political factor had a destructive influence on Greek-Catholics after 1948, with the dawn of the communist era. It was the moment when Greek-Catholic representatives were coerced into conversion to Orthodoxism, and their example was followed by their communities. The Austrian-Hungarian census of 1880 generated many uncertainties, especially for the Jewish and Orthodox communities. The census recorded 4.900 people of Jewish faith, but no persons of Jewish ethnicity. It is clear that the political-administrative (Austro-Hungarian) factor significantly influenced the census itself, resulting in major errors. At the census held in 2011, the second most numerous denomination in the Apuseni, after Orthodoxism, was Pentecostalism. After the 1989 Revolution, the legislative environment became favourable for the establishment of new religions and denominations. In conclusion, we must point out that Christian-Orthodoxism laid the foundation for the continuity of the Romanian language and the solidification of social ties in the Apuseni Mountains. These strong bonds became apparent through several historical acts of national and international importance, started in the heart of the Apuseni Mountains.

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